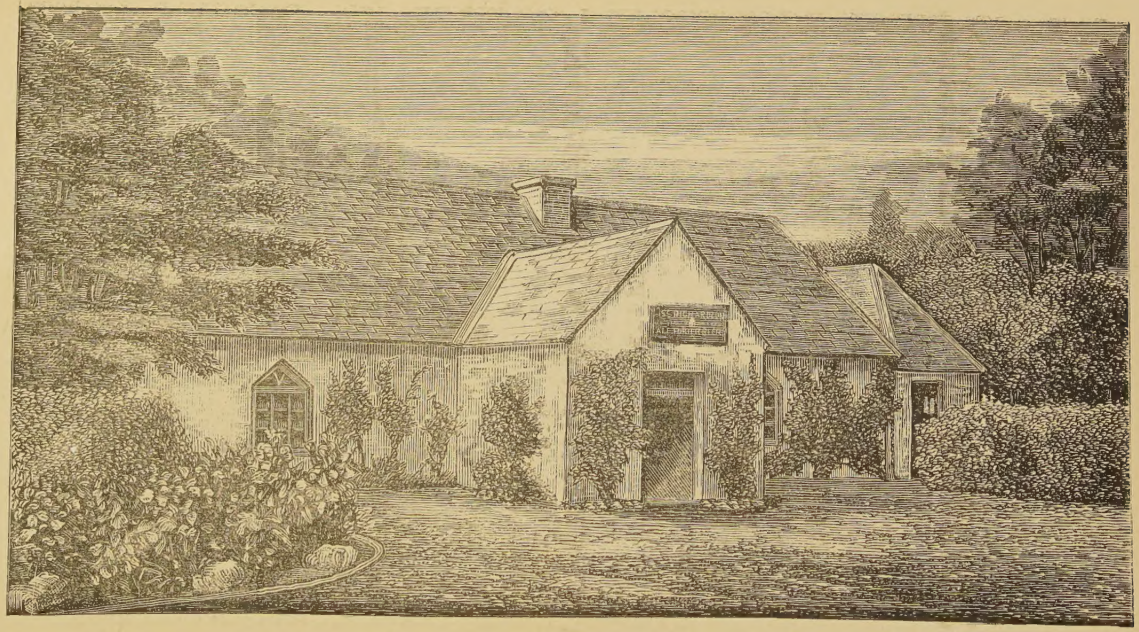
$\frac{d\psi}{E/L\times}$



ST. MARY'S COTTAGE, ST. MARY'S LOCH.

THE

Salmonidæ of Westmorland,

ANGLING REMINISCENCES,

AND

LEAVES FROM

AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK,

BY

GEO. FOSTER BRAITHWAITE.

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

KENDAL:
PRINTED BY ATKINSON AND POLLITT,
1884.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/salmonidaeofwest0000geof

PREFACE.

THE following series of papers originally appeared in the *Westmorland Gazette*, and were written for my own amusement. I little thought of their ever assuming the form of a book, but at the request of many of my friends I have been induced to put them into that shape. Where any reference is made to historical or topographical facts, no pains has been spared in verifying them. Respecting the icthyological portion, I have faithfully given the results of my own experience and research. At the same time the nature of the subject is such that I am quite prepared to see fresh light thrown on the habits of Salmonidæ, thereby solving many unexplained features of these interesting fish. I cannot conclude without heartily thanking those who kindly aided me in pointing out objects of interest, giving me a clue to traditionary lore, or explaining specialities in the mode of fishing as practised in their districts.

GEO. FOSTER BRAITHWAITE.

Hawesmead, Kendal,
October 7th, 1884.

"The loftie woods, the forrests wide and long
Adorn'd with leaves and branches fresh and green,
In whose cool bowres the birds, with many a song,
Do welcom with their quire the *Sumer's Queen;*
The meadows fair, where *Flora's* gifts among
Are intermixt, with verdant grass between.
The silver-scaled *fish* that softly swim
Within the sweet brooks chrystal watry stream.

All these, and many more of His creation,
That made the heavens, the *Angler* oft doth see,
Taking therein no little delectation,
To think how strange, how wonderful they be;
Framing thereof an inward contemplation,
To set his heart from other fancies free;
And whilst he looks on these with joyful eye,
His mind is rapt above the Starry Skie."

—*Walton's Angler.* JO. DAVORS, ESQ.
1st Edition, 1653.

CONTENTS.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Salmon — Salmon Trout — Sprods or Herling — Bull Trout ... 1

CHAPTER II.

Common Trout — Ferox — Char — Fresh Water Herring ... 5

CHAPTER III.

Vendace — Lochmaben — Sparlings 9

CHAPTER IV.

Breeding Grounds — Scarcity of Trout in Ullswater — Catching Salmon with a Low and Spear — Extraordinary Remedy for Pulmonary Consumption — Hatching of Ova 12

CHAPTER V.

Food of Salmon — Mode of Capture — Perils of a Salmon's ascent from the Sea to the Spawning Ground — Exciting Angling Scene 18

CHAPTER VI.

PAGE

Modes of Capture, continued — Size of Mesh — Food of Salmon and Trout — May Fly — Various Descriptions of Nets — Worm Fishing and Fly Fishing contrasted 23

CHAPTER VII.

Lath Fishing as formerly practised, with Description of Windermere — Char Fishing — Plumb Line — Trolling Rods — Charms of Friendship 30

CHAPTER VIII.

Acts for the Protection of Salmonidæ — Great Productiveness under Proper Care — Breeding Ponds 37

CHAPTER IX.

Obstructions Adverse to the Increase of Fish—Various Detrimental Matters — Upper Part of the Lune — Johnny and his Calf — The Howgill Poet — Adventures of the Howgill Poet — His Escape from Drowning, &c. 43

CHAPTER X.

"Need Fire"— Remarkable Thunderstorm — The Howgill Poet at Borrow Bridge — Increase of Fish in Loch Leven 50

CHAPTER XI.

Capability of our various Lakes for producing Fish 56

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Fishing in Boyhood — My first Trout — Joe Winn — First Visit to the Lune — Borrow Bridge and Mrs. Noble — W. G. Best — Penrith — Thomas Wilkinson — Elizabeth Ritson — Pooley Bridge 59

CHAPTER II.

Tom Watt — Fishing on Ullswater — Catching Chub — Thomas Rigge — Tirril — John Slee — Rothay Bank — Fishing on Windermere — Heavy Snowstorm — The late Mr. Crosfield — The late Mr. Head and his Father — Alteration of Course of the Rothay by Mr. Brancker 65

CHAPTER III.

Howgill — Esther Best's Potted Trout — Walk alongside of Chapel Beck — Howgill Chapel — The Old Schoolhouse and Scholars — Amusing Incident — The late Rev. R. C. Hadwin — The Master — Fishing in the Lune — Falling into the River — Excursion into Wales — Ascents up Snowdon, &c. 73

CHAPTER IV.

A Week with Friends in the Lake District — Charles Gough's Dog — Ullswater — Keswick — William Bow the Veteran Angler — A Night on Derwentwater — John Backhouse, an Expert Guide — Robert Wilson, of Orton — Geo. Whitehead — Remarkable effect of the Song of a Thrush 79

CHAPTER V.

Earthquake — Visit to St. Mary's Loch — St. Mary's Cottage ... 85

CHAPTER VI.

PAGE

St. Mary's Loch — Its Surroundings — Fish and Fishing — Tibbie Shiels — Henderlands — St. Mary's Kirk — Raid of James V. on Tushielaw and Henderlands — Dick of Dryhope and Kinmont Willie 91

CHAPTER VII.

Description of St. Mary's Cottage — Scene from "Noctes Ambrosianæ" — Covenanters — Birkhill — Janet and the Tramp — New Abbey — Loch Kinder — Lord Dangerfield 98

CHAPTER VIII.

Translation of Epitaph — St. Mary's — Ettrick Kirk — Fishing Scene — Dalwhinnie — Donald Kennedy — Loch Ericht .. 105

CHAPTER IX.

Loch Laggan — Description of Country — Past and Present State of Population in the District — Landlords preparation for the Queen on her way to Inverlochy — Trolling on the Loch — Journey Home via Oban and Loch Lomond 111

CHAPTER X.

Loch Earnhead — The Trossachs — Loch Katrine — Fishing, with Description of Scenery — Loch Lomond — Drive from Tarbet to Inverary — Loch Awe — Brander Pass — Glen Orchy — Inverouran Hotel — Loch Tulla — Catching a Fine Trout ... 117

CHAPTER XI.

Blackmount Deer Forest — Decline of the Native Population — Cause of that Decline — Unseasonable Salmon — Frail Boat — Tyndrum — A Few Hours Nice Fly Fishing — Journey to St. Mary's Loch — Carriage Sticking in a Snow Drift — Horse Frightened with the Snow — Carriage Extricated by the Aid of Shepherds 121

CHAPTER XII.

PAGE

Rain and Snow succeeded by Hard Frost — Pools Frozen — Absence of Sparrows at St. Mary's Loch — Scotchman's View of American Education — A Visit to St. Mary's in June — Great Need for Protection of Trout in Scotland 126

CHAPTER XIII.

Walk to the Hart's-leap — Altrive and Mount Benger — Remains of a Hamlet near Cross Cleuch — Description of the Country and Inhabitants in the 17th Century — The Covenanters — How Mass John was Shot — Traditionary Account of the Raid of James the Vth on Tushielaw and Henderland, with the Description of the Road taken by the King — Verse of an Old Ballad — Snow Storms and Floods in Former Years — Glen Gaber — Beautiful Walk 131

CHAPTER XIV.

New Abbey — Light Baskets — Beautiful Scenery — Haaf-net Fishers — Heavy Rain — Parting with my Dear Friends — Successful Day — Globe Inn — Poet Burns 141

CHAPTER XV.

Mrs. Caird — "Coming through the Rye"— Caerlaverock Castle — Barons and Knights at the Siege in 1300 — My Friend's Silver Match Box Found — Covenanters Tied to Stakes in the Tidal Way of the Solway—Auldgirth Salmon Leaping under our Rods and Refusing to be Caught—W. G. Best's Invitation—Amusing Incident — Remarkable Preservation 147

LEAVES FROM AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK.

CHAPTER XVI.

PAGE

Fishing up the Rothay — Straightening the Course of a River prejudicial to the Increase of Fish — Ambleside Rushbearing — Rev. Owen Lloyd — Poet Wordsworth — Shear Tom — Power of Smell in Fishes and in Dogs — A Fishing Cat — Strong Maternal Instinct in a Hen 158

CHAPTER XVII.

Ullswater — Reasons for Scarcity of Fish therein — Beautiful Day in Martindale — Henry Wilkinson — Thrang Cragg — Boardale — Sandwyke — Blue Joe — Rev. Thomas Wilkinson ... 163

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Atmosphere in which Fish Live — Variety of Dental Arrangement — Mouth Chewers — Throat Chewers — Professor Owen on the Subject — Cuddies — Lateral Line — Remarkable Instances of Voracity in Fish — Cuvier on the Relative Position of Fishes in the Animal Scale — Salmon in Windermere 167

CHAPTER XIX.

Fighting Power of Wasps — A Trout with Too Big a Mouthful — Artificial Fly Dressing and the Necessity for Good Materials — Charlie Airey's Way of Fly Fishing — Kendal Hooks — The late Dr. Gough — Sprods and Herling — Distinctive Marks of Salmon, Salmon Trout, Bull Trout, Common Trout, and *Salmo Ferox* ... 174

CHAPTER XX.

Salmo Ferox, or Great Lake Trout — D. Kennedy's Letter with Description of that Fish and an Account of Disastrous Harvest —Various Angling Incidents — Conclusion 180

ERRATA AND ADDENDA.

Page 88, line 15 — For "a level ride of a mile and a half" read "a level ride of a mile."

Page 95, line 4 — For "Dool Linn" read "Dhu Linn."

Page 132 — The Hart's-leap — Having again carefully examined the stones (September 24, 1884), I could not find sufficient evidence to verify the date. The two stones have been placed there, and no reasonable doubt can exist as to their marking the leap of a hart. There are letters on one stone, but, unfortunately, the originals have been more or less defaced by subsequent markings, which is much to be regretted, as from the selection of the stones and the way in which they have been fixed in the ground strong proof is afforded of the reliability of the tradition.

Page 160, line 11 — For "solmon roe" read "salmon roe."

Page 163, lines 7, 8 — For "concisely the parts" read "concisely the facts."

Page 167, line 4, heading — For "Veracity" read "Voracity."

Page 168, line 18 — For "Genus *Cyprinidæ* have no teeth" read "Genus *Cyprinidæ* have no teeth in the mouth."

Page 179, line 32 — For "curtilage" read "cartilage."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

St. Mary's Cottage *(Frontispiece)*.

Howgill Chapel 74

St. Mary's Loch 91

Ullswater 163

SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

MIGRATORY SALMONIDÆ.

I.

Salmon — Salmon Trout — Sprods or Herling — Bull Trout.

During the reign of Edward III., in 1333, an agreement was made between Walter de Strickland, of Sizergh, and William de Thweng, of Helsington, securing to the latter, and to his heirs, and to his fishermen, a bridle way to and from his fishery at the Force at all seasons. This agreement shews clearly that fish of considerable value were caught at the Force in the river Kent, and also that the fishermen were induced to go there for salmon—salmon-trout and other varieties of migratory salmonidæ.

In a book on angling written in 1800, by Samuel Taylor, a gentleman who appears to have devoted his leisure to angling in almost every part of the United Kingdom, he says, "in the Kent a little below Kendal I have had fine diversion with the salmon trout which run up the river from the sea"—adding also "that the rivers in Westmorland are well stocked with trout." We may fairly conclude that formerly the passage up the river was more easily accomplished than it was twenty years ago, as about the latter time a salmon in the Kent above the Force was a rarity. However, I am not going further into that portion of the subject now, and will leave it by saying that considerable

pains have been taken to aid the fish in their ascent, and for the past few years the numbers have steadily increased.

Salmon is a noble fish—spending half of its existence in the sea, where it feeds greedily on a variety of animal life, which increases its growth rapidly and produces the rich flesh so much appreciated, it only comes to our inland waters for the purpose of depositing its ova, and when that is accomplished, commences its return to the sea, taking advantage of moderately swollen water to aid it over the weirs and other obstructions which it descends tail first, as in that position it has greater power of regulating its motions. They have large productive powers, a fish of 10lbs. weight containing 10,000 eggs.

Salmon frequent nearly all our Westmorland rivers, and are numerous in proportion to the facility of ascent and the suitability of the ground for depositing and fertilizing the eggs.

Clean sandy gravel is found the best, especially where a nice run of water flows. The head waters of the Kent beyond Staveley, though possessing good breeding ground, are entirely shut off from salmon by the weir of the old mill. Such is the case with the Sprint, which has excellent ground for breeding in the Longsleddale valley, but the weir at Mr. Seed's mill is an impassable barrier.

There is no obstruction preventing their passage to the upper tributaries of the Mint, and in consequence a larger number of migratory salmonidæ avail themselves of that stream. Salmon run up the Bela as far as the weir at the paper mill, which is impassable. If that river was accessible large quantities of salmon trout would frequent its waters on account of the prevalence of peat along a part of its course.

I need not enumerate further, having previously said that nearly all the rivers in this county are fit for breeding salmon, and if obstructions could be modified we should have a large increase of the supply of that fish. Our migratory salmonidæ

in Westmorland consist of salmon, *salmo salar;* salmon trout, *salmo trutta* (locally called "morts"); *salmo albus* (locally "sprods"). Bull trout, or *salmo eriox,* are rarely met with even in the tributaries of the Eden.

Salmon and salmon trout are well known species, but *salmo albus* or "sprods"—similar to the "smelts" of the Irt, Calder, and Ehen, and to the herling of the Esk and Nith in Scotland—is a species about which no naturalist has been able to arrive at a conclusion apparently satisfactory to his own mind.

Yarrel says "they so exactly resemble the young of the salmon trout" (or what we should expect them to be) "on its first return from the sea, that I am unable to point out any sufficiently distinguishing specific character." Now I have always felt the same difficulty. After spending hours over an investigation of this fish with the late Mr. Gough we came to the conclusion that they are not young salmon as averred by some, but they may be a variety of salmon trout. Pending further information I will, though feeling doubtful of their being even a distinct variety, adopt the nomenclature of *salmo albus.*

Much difficulty exists in the latter theory. Salmon trout are caught from ¾lb. up to 8lbs., 10lbs., and upwards of 12lbs. Off Whitby large numbers are taken of between 6lbs. and 12lbs., and yet I have never heard of a "sprod," herling or smelt *(salmo albus)* being taken over 1lb. weight either in this county, Cumberland, or Scotland. Comparing them with salmon trout which grow to a much larger size, and on examination finding that the vertebræ, fin rays, gill covers, and teeth are almost identical, notwithstanding a slight general appearance of difference in the shape of the fish, I confess I experience great difficulty in forming a satisfactory conclusion. Milt is found in the males and ova in females, though numbers examined by me in the season of 1883 contained neither.

There are in the estuary of the Irish rivers Lee and Bandon a species of fish called tidal trout, which are caught within the range of the tide. Elvers or eel fry are the best bait, as on these they feed greedily. I mention this species only by the way, thinking it may remind some of our anglers in the brackish waters of a similar species, as I wish to confine this paper to the migratory fish of the district.

I must mention also that during March and April there appears in the lower waters of the Kent and Leven a very pretty fish from 3oz. to 4oz. or 5oz. in weight, in appearance like a full grown smoult with brilliant red spots, dead fin fringed with crimson, the bright scales coming off with slight handling. I am at a loss to know the exact species. The food and habits of the various species I must leave for the present, as I propose in a future paper to say a few words about trout and the non-migratory salmonidæ.

THE NON-MIGRATORY SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

II.

Common Trout — Ferox — Char — Fresh Water Herring.

THE county of Westmorland abounds in rivers, lakes, and tarns, all of which contain non-migratory salmonidæ. This class of fish consists of trout (*salmo fario*), the great lake trout (*salmo ferox*), the char (*salmo salvelinus*), the gwyniad or fresh water herring. The vendace or vendis and the smelt, or sparling, which latter ought perhaps to be placed in the list of migratory salmonidæ, as it spends nearly three-fourths of its existence in the brackish waters at the mouths of our rivers, and the remaining portion in the sea. But as we do not find it out of the influence of tidal water, I have included it in the above list.

Of all the species here enumerated the common trout, *salmo fario*, or brown trout, as named in Scotland to distinguish it from the salmon trout, is the most widely diffused, and is found not only in our lakes and tarns, but in all streams capable of sustaining its existence. Unlike the salmon its life is spent in fresh water, but in the autumn it ascends the rivers in order to deposit its ova, and so makes the affluents to our larger streams into nurseries for its young, which, like nearly all salmonidæ, have for the first year or two of their existence transverse steel coloured bar marks along their sides, after which period they become coated

with the covering of a full grown fish in appearance. The size and colour of their skin varies with their different localities, so much so as to lead anglers to the conclusion that several species of *salmo fario* exist in our lakes and rivers. However, when carefully examined, no generic difference can be traced, only one notable example of such a striking difference in colour as might afford strong ground for supporting the theory that a variety in the species exists, occurs to me. The trout caught in a tributary to the Eden, in a valley in Mallerstang called Divockdale, have a red fringe round the tail and dorsal fin—finger marked along the sides on which are several bright crimson spots. The sides have also a beautiful azure tint—the belly is white, one supposition advanced is that they are char. Specimens were sent to the late Mr. Buckland, but, I believe, no opinion was received from him. On careful inspection the idea of their being char cannot be borne out—their scales are much larger than those of char, and that fish is not an inhabitant of rapid streams during the whole of the year. The colour of the flesh of trout also varies, that of some being white, some yellowish, whilst that of others is pink, which latter tinge is generally thought to arise from those fish having enjoyed rich food and plenty of it. Trout, like salmon, are very prolific. Whilst instances are on record of their attaining 8lbs. to 12lbs. in weight, the size of those usually caught in our river varies from 4oz. to 1lb. or 1½lb., and in our lakes from 4oz. up to 4lbs. or 6lbs.

There were a few years ago numbers of the great lake trout, *salmo ferox*, in Ullswater. Richard Mounsey, of Howtown, Martindale, remembers seeing parties of men coming to Patterdale in the autumn for the express purpose of spearing these fish. He also remembers one fish speared in Goldrill Beck 18lbs. weight. I was informed by a gentleman that one was pointed out to him at the head of the lake by a boatman two years ago,—the only instance that has

come to my knowledge for the last ten years of the existence of that species in Ullswater. It is generally thought they are now extinct in that locality. This fish is in its generic character very similar to the common trout ; but its fins are larger as well as the head ; the teeth are stronger, also the spots on its skin are larger.

When first taken out of the water the body appears as if glazed over with a thin tint of rich lake colour which fades as the fish dies. This species is found in Windermere. It is not an inhabiter of our rivers, frequenting them only at the breeding season. As its name ferox implies, it is a bold and savage looking fish, and is seldom caught with the fly. Its flesh has a slightly yellow colour and the flavour is not rich.

Char (*salmo salvelinus*) is a valuable fish, for where rightly protected it is very prolific, and the flesh is not only rich in quality but sweet in flavour. They are easily distinguished from the other salmonidæ by the smallness of their scales, the beautiful light coloured spots principally above the lateral line, and also by the bright red or orange tint of the belly at the breeding season. The fishermen on Windermere recognise two species — gilt char and case char — whilst naturalists fail to discover any generic difference ; it is well known that they spawn at different periods between the end of September and beginning of March. One description taking the earlier time and the other the later. As I have said before, char are not denizens of our rivers, with the exception of a few at the breeding season, and live mostly in the deepest part of our lakes, on the banks of which the greater portion of them deposit their ova. They used to be plentiful in Ullswater, but are now extinct there. Windermere and Haweswater are the principal localities in Westmorland where they abound.

The gwyniad or fresh water herring was very numerous in Ullswater twenty-five years ago ; Haweswater also contained

a goodly number. In September, 1840, the Earl of Lonsdale's fishermen took 800 along with other fish at a single sweep of the net in Haweswater. Red Tarn contained a similar species. In shape they somewhat resemble a herring, only they are rounder in the body. They are devoid of spots, and owing to the size of the scales covering the skin they are called schellies or skellies. They deposit their ova in the lake. They attain to two or three pounds in weight, swim about in shoals, are rarely caught with the rod, and are insipid eating. I may here remark they must not be confounded with chub, which from being also covered with large scales are called at the Pooley Bridge end of Ullswater, and along the Eamont and Eden, skellies.

NON-MIGRATORY SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

III.

Vendace — Lochmaben — Sparlings.

THE vendace or vendis is a fish which will be recognised by only a few of my readers. Those amongst them who have visited Lochmaben in Dumfriesshire, will probably either have been present when this fish has been caught, or may have feasted upon it when cooked.

The vendace is a delicate fish seldom exceeding eight inches in length; the female being generally the larger of the two. In shape it resembles the fresh water herring of Ullswater, only much more beautiful and delicate in appearance. Dr. Davy came into possession of some specimens of this species which were caught in Windermere, the only lake in Westmorland where, according to the information I possess, it has been found. Anyone inspecting the museum at Keswick may see a specimen which was caught in the Greta. As I before stated, Lochmaben abounds with them, where they swim about in large shoals and afford amusement to visitors in July, who meet to catch them with a net. The vendace being so rare a species of salmonidæ in this county, I shall not probably have occasion to refer to it again, and therefore will conclude my description of this interesting fish. Lochmaben being the only place in the United Kingdom where it is known to exist in large numbers some traditions and curious opinions exist respecting it, and

the Loch is regarded with pride as possessing something of great curiosity to visitors. Pennant mentions one story current, that the vendace was introduced into Lochmaben by the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. Though very unwilling to deprive this story of its romance, I am bound to say it will not bear the test of investigation.

In its general habits the vendace nearly resembles the gwyniad or fresh water herring of Ullswater. They swim in large shoals, and in warm weather often retire to deep water. Feeding principally on minute entomostracous animals, they rarely take the angler's bait, and when wanted for the table a net is employed for their capture.

They spawn in November, congregating in large shoals, frequently rising to the surface like the common herring and making a similar noise by their rise and fall to and from the surface ; they have a few very minute teeth on the tongue only, but the mouth is well adapted to the food on which they live. The upper parts of the body are of a delicate greenish brown or olive colour, shading gradually towards the belly into a clear silver. The dorsal fin is dark olive and the lower fins are all bluish white. The flesh is exceedingly delicate and fully justifies the estimation in which it is held.

I now come to the last species of our non-migratory salmonidæ. The smelt or sparling (*salmo eperlanus*) is a small bright-looking fish varying in size from six inches to nine inches, and is at times plentiful at the mouth of the Kent. Whilst the grayling is said to be redolent of thyme, the pike of weeds, and the tench and carp of mud, the sparling enjoys the reputation of carrying about with it a strong odour of cucumber, which in connection with the extreme delicacy of its flesh causes the fish to be much prized, especially by invalids whose digestion may be weak. So completely does the sparling carry the cucumber smell about with it that fishermen drawing a net for salmon

through water containing a shoal of this species, though not one sparling may be caught in it, the net will be impregnated strongly with the cucumber odour. They do not usually take a bait, though feeding as they do on shrimps, young fish, and testaceous animals, I do not see any reason why the angler should not successfully offer them a tempting morsel. They spawn in brackish water in March and April, and retire for a short time to the sea.

Having now given a general description of the salmonidæ of Westmorland, I propose in a future chapter to enter into details respecting their habits, food, and mode of capture, as well as the means for utilising so valuable a store of food.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

IV.

Breeding Grounds — Scarcity of Trout in Ullswater — Catching Salmon with a Low and Spear — Extraordinary Remedy for Pulmonary Consumption — Hatching of Ova.

In previous chapters I enumerated the various species of migratory and non-migratory salmonidæ of Westmorland, and in fulfilment of my promise I intend to occupy a portion of the future chapters with a notice of their habits, food, etc., in doing which, as the instincts of the respective species wherever found are very similar, I shall not in elucidating facts confine myself to Westmorland.

The salmon (*salmo salar*), the salmon trout (*salmo trutta*), the sprod or herling (*salmo albus*), and the common trout (*salmo fario*), have similar powers of locomotion in a greater or less degree. Though the latter (common trout) does not migrate to the sea, they all ascend the rivers in the autumn for the purpose of breeding. So soon as that season comes round one instinct pervades them, and in spite of difficulties which would deter natures more refined, they press forward through rapids, over rocks and weirs, until they reach such streams as nature teaches them are suitable for depositing their ova.

The migratory salmonidæ have such a decided preference for running water, that whilst instances are not wanting where trout deposit their spawn in the gravelly beds of mountain tarns, I am not aware of salmon ever making a breeding ground in any other situation than that of a running stream.

In each species the desire to deposit their ova in flowing water is so powerful that where the feeders of a lake are deficient in accommodation for that purpose, trout will descend the river flowing therefrom in order to ascend some of its tributaries. Two instances in proof of this may be recorded. The trout in the lower portion of Ullswater descended the Eamont in order to run up the Dacre and Lowther, two capital breeding streams. Some twenty years ago a weir was placed across the Eamont above its junction with the Lowther, for the purpose of supplying the town of Penrith with water. A fish-pass was appended thereto, but being accessible in the ascent to salmon only, the trout which go down are unable to return as formerly—a consequence of this is that the number of trout in Ullswater has rapidly decreased.

I am aware there are some persons well acquainted with the locality who are unwilling to admit the fact as stated by me, and confidently hold to the view that the scarcity of trout in Ullswater arises from two causes, namely, the washing of lead ore in Glenridding Beck and the destruction of young trout in the breeding streams; also the illegal capture of the spawning trout in the autumn. I willingly admit the possibility of injury to some extent by water from the lead mines, but knowing that the mines have been in existence for centuries, and in active operation for the last eighty years, and that Ullswater continued to be one of the best angling lakes in the North of England until the weir spoken of was erected, I have strong grounds for concluding that the weir in question has been a principal cause of injury to the fishing on Ullswater, especially in its lower reaches.

In confirmation of this opinion I adduce a striking fact. An old friend of mine, an excellent and successful fly-fisher, used to go to Pooley Bridge for the day, two or three times during the season, and usually returned home with from ten pounds to twelve pounds of fine trout, the produce of six or

eight hours' angling. After the weir was erected the sport became so poor that he ceased to fish there, and though in 1869 and 1870 he spent six weeks with his family on the shores of Ullswater, and was as fond of angling as ever, nothing could induce him to exercise the gentle art on that lovely and once well stored lake.

He said "No, the trout are not there," in which sentiment after a few days' experience I fully concurred.

The other instance is that of Loch Kinder, at the foot of Criffel, in Dumfriesshire. This small loch is fed by a number of rivulets, one only being of sufficient magnitude for any fish to breed therein. A nice and constant flow of water proceeds from the loch, and down this the breeding trout went. The loch abounded in fish of fair size and of excellent quality. The estimable proprietor, who rejoiced to give his friends the opportunity of capital sport in a charming locality, was induced to place a grating across the mouth of the stream, thinking by that to retain the fish so that they could not fall a prey to anglers and poachers in the stream out of his domain. No sooner was this done than the sport of his friends declined, and after three years he became alive to the necessity of again allowing the trout to have access to the stream flowing out of the loch.

As I before stated, salmon and trout, when the time for depositing their ova arrives, appear to abandon themselves to the accomplishment of that object. When the salmon has found a suitable spot, with the aid of its mate a diagonal furrow in the gravel is made in which the eggs are deposited. Whilst the furrow is being made, the fish seems to lose all sense of fear, and can easily be taken with click-hooks. Large numbers used to be taken by using a torch, commonly called a "low," at night, by the light of which the monarch of the brook could be distinctly seen, whether lying close to the bottom or swimming in mid-water, when the fatal spear with its barbed points secured the prey.

Many are the tales about illegal salmon fishing told by those who followed the exciting sport, the poacher sometimes making a false stroke at the fish and falling headlong into a rapid stream, and struggling in the dark to regain the bank. Four or five men are engaged with "lows" in spearing salmon — the night is pitch dark, the river rocky, with wooded banks — the lights gleam across the black looking water, a spear with its cruel barbs descends with unerring aim, the fish writhes, lashes the water with its tail, and the strength of the poacher is taxed to the utmost. A signal is suddenly given that the river watchers, aided by the brilliant glare, are about to close in upon the poachers. Instantly the torches are plunged into the water, and all is dark, pitch dark. Poachers and watchers have to help themselves as best they can.

A well known shepherd and poet, who combined with the above qualifications the pastime of angler, was taken ill and gradually became worse; at last he was confined to the house, as the doctor was afraid of rapid consumption setting in. It was about Christmas time, a slight fall of snow had whitened the hard ground, a neighbour looked in and after usual inquiries said, "Why your brother is going after salmon." "Where is he going to?" Why to such a place, naming the locality. "Well," said the sick man, "I have been in the house six weeks, and am no better. Its only half a mile. I'll put on my shoes and top-coat, and see what they are after." He reached the river side and watched them; by-and-by he thought they were making such a bungle of it he could stand it no longer, and into the water he went up to to his knees for nearly half an hour, got the salmon, and on arriving at home his trousers were frozen — his wife thought he had killed himself — but he mended rapidly from that time, and years after I had many pleasant fishing excursions with him.

A similar process in the gravel is carried on by salmon

trout, sprods, or herling, and the common trout, which latter being smaller and not so powerful, frequently rest awhile at the foot of rapids or in some quiet place prior to making the ascent of a torrent. It is when thus congregated that they are seized upon by the poacher, who with an ordinary landing net soon fills his basket.

After having deposited their ova, the migratory species seek the sea, at which they arrive thin and poor in condition, and quite unfit for the table. A few weeks residence in salt water restores them.

The trout also return to the larger streams whence they came. It is supposed by many that trout seek their old locations. Probably to some extent this is true, but we may, I think, presume that a fish on its way back from the upper water will continue its journey until it arrives in the district in which it previously lived, where it will seize upon a residence under some root, rock, or stone to its own liking. Should it find such a place occupied by a weaker member of the community, a battle will ensue, and the weaker may have to decamp. So in feeding, the small fish have to give way to the more powerful ones. Thus if trout are on the feed and the angler casts his fly or bait near some favourite haunt, and it is seized by a small fish, he may conclude that a brother angler has forestalled him or that his tackle is wrong.

So many works have been written about the young of salmonidæ that I will only give a cursory description lest I weary my readers.

The eggs are hatched in about 90 to 130 days, according to the temperature of the water. It has been found that the eggs are injured by cold below 32, and by heat over 60 degrees. The fry grow rapidly, and for one or two years, and in some cases three, are finger-marked along their sides. Prior to the young migratory salmonidæ going to sea, which they do in May, when over one, two, or even three years

old, they assume a bright silver coat on the top of the old one — any one scraping off the new dress will find the old finger-marks underneath. The young trout also assume the dress of the full-grown fish at similar ages, when they wend their way towards the water from which their parents ascended. According to careful experiments made at the Stormontfield breeding ponds on the Tay, in Perthshire, the fry of the migratory salmonidæ assume their silvery dress at the end of the first, second, or third year of their existence. It is estimated that about half of the brood go at the end of the first year, the rest remaining, some for one year and a few for two years. If this harmonises with their habits in a natural state, it explains why anglers occasionally catch throughout the season salmon fry — locally designated pinks or brandlings of various sizes and ages.

The descent to the sea takes place in May, the young fish weighing from 1½ to 3 oz. Well established facts prove that smoults (the fry being so named when they have attained their sea-going attire) which left the fresh water in the middle of May, have been caught in their ascent in August of the same year three to five pounds in weight. In this state they are called grilse. It is assumed generally that for some years after the grilse state salmon increase in weight from five to seven pounds annually. It is also estimated that the female deposits one thousand eggs for each pound she weighs, thus a fish of 12lbs. contains twelve thousand eggs.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

V.

Food of Salmon — Mode of Capture — Perils of a Salmon's ascent from the Sea to the Spawning Ground — Exciting Angling Scene.

THE sea is indeed a storehouse of food for its inhabitants. Its waters are impregnated with animalculæ, some invisible to the naked eye except at night, when a vessel under a steady breeze or propelled by steam bounds over the waves, leaving in her wake like a comet a tract of fire proceeding from millions of animalculæ. These minute creatures feed not only a portion of our fishes such as the herring, but perform an active part in rearing the structure of our great leviathan the whale. However, our salmonidæ have an inclination for food more substantial in character. Hitherto the samlets have in the fresh water been content with small worms, grubs, caterpillars, larvæ of insects and flies, &c., but the sea opens a wider and perhaps a more tasty range of food and in greater abundance. Whilst from the contents of a trout's stomach the nature of its last meal can be easily ascertained; such is not the case with the migratory salmonidæ, and you often hear it said — nothing is ever found in a salmon's stomach, which in great measure is true, but as every rule has its exceptions, we are not without substantial proof of what sort of repasts the salmonidæ enjoy when revelling in the salt water — the ova or eggs of the various kinds of echinoderamata and some of the crustacea — small crabs, flooks, sand eels. Mr. A. Morrison in a prize essay published in the transactions of the Highland

Society, says : — I have taken salmon within flood mark of the tide, some of which had two and others three full sized herrings in their stomachs. Salmon trout of ten or twelve pounds in weight when taken out of the net by the Whitby fishermen have had their mouths full of sand eels, probably in the act of disgorging them. From the above facts, and knowing that the migratory salmonidæ during their few months' residence in the sea grow rapidly in size as well as in excellence of condition, we may fairly conclude they feed greedily on the rich variety of animal life with which our shores abound, and at the time pointed out to them by natural instinct, they return to our rivers fat and well flavoured to furnish our tables with nourishing food.

So soon as this season arrives the ingenuity of man is taxed to effect their capture. The only modes adopted in this county is by angling and draught nets, but we may take a wider range and draw a picture of a salmon which, after having feasted for some months on the abundance found in the sea, commences its periodical visit to its native river. As it nears the coast its passage is obstructed by a net near which are some boats, and suddenly it and its companions are startled by a great commotion caused by the fishermen in the boats beating the water with long poles. Several fish rushing madly against the net are entangled in the meshes, and soon deposited in the creel. In this way many thousands are captured every season off the coast of Northumberland. The hero of our tale was more wary, and taking things more quietly passed by the net and resumed its course towards the mouth of the river. Here again its path was blocked by a succession of long nets, each attached to a boat across the inflowing tide. Wariness being a feature in its character enabled it to pass these snares, and it commenced regaling itself on sand eels, small crabs, and other delicacies along the banks. Whilst so engaged its nose touches a net about fourteen feet wide,

four feet deep, stretched on a light frame, the bottom resting on the sand, the top supported by a fisherman, who is standing with a thick blanket wound around his loins, and up to his breast in the flowing tide, with a wooden hammer attached to the wrist of his right hand. No sooner has the nose of the fish touched the meshes than, aware of danger, it swerves towards deeper water and so escapes, and sailing along keeps a good look out for these haaf nets, of which it passes as many as thirty within a distance of about two miles. Having run this gauntlet and finding a deep quiet pool and genial companions it quietly settles itself down to repose. Soon the tide begins to ebb, but its place of refuge being deep the alteration in the water gives it no concern. There it lies for four hours congratulating itself on its recent escape. Presently it observes a change, a net comes rolling along the bottom carrying all before it, the fish starts and rises, thinking to swim over the top, but alas the corks on the top rope keep it floating, as the lead on the bottom cord presses it closer to the sand — it rushes up the stream to its dismay to find itself encircled along with its companions in the fatal engine. Just as the fishermen are dragging the net with its contents into shallower water, and already counting their gain, it pauses for a moment, moves back from the net, takes one desperate leap, and to the mortification of its would be captors clears the top rope and again escapes. "I say Bob, mind what you're about, that was a thirty pounder, we mussent lose him. We must draw this hole again." But our salmon has taken warning and changes its residence until the next flow of the tide. Other engines of a similar kind beset its path, but at last it gains the fresh water.

Two young gentlemen meet, and one says to the other "Did you hear what a fine lot of salmon are in the river? Let us go to-morrow and make a day of it." The morning comes, with rods, flies, tackle of every description, and

well-greased boots, off they set buoyant with hope. The rain during the night has laid the dust, vegetation is refreshed, and all nature wears a genial aspect.

On reaching the favourite spot they adjust their rods and attach their flies to the lines ; a gentle breeze ripples the surface of the water, the atmosphere is most favourable for the sport. Our old friend the salmon once more delighting in the fresh water has found a rock alongside which it has located itself, watching with an eager eye for whatever approaches it in the shape of insect life. Presently it rises to the surface. "There, there," exclaims one of our anglers, "what a fine salmon has risen by that rock"— he casts his fly on the water — it falls short of the spot, he lets out more line and down it comes a few feet above where the fish lies. The stream carries it down, our angler gives his rod a gentle motion, the fish sees the fly approaching, and presently seizes the apparently delicious morsel. Just as the salmon descends with the fly in its mouth the angler raises the top of his rod, and the fatal barb is fixed in the jaws of the fish. "There he is, I have him" calls out our angler, "Now for it," up jumps our salmon three feet out of the water, down he goes again, and rushes up the stream with incredible speed. Whiz, whiz, goes the reel, the top of the rod is kept well up, but nothing can stay his impetuous career, until fifty yards of line are out ; then the salmon whose strength is for a time exhausted rests awhile. Our angler patiently waits, if a smoker, lights his pipe. In ten minutes, or perhaps longer, he feels a movement, back comes the fish towards the rock, the angler reels up his line as quickly as possible, until he feels the strain upon the rod, when up leaps the salmon, and the angler exclaims, "another such jump and he'll break the line with his tail." "If he runs across that rock, my line will be cut." After a few more violent efforts the strength of our finny hero seems gradually yielding, and it is carefully drawn towards the bank. Our angler now

craves the aid of his friend in securing his prize. Just as the gaff is descending the fish finding its strength renovated, makes a violent plunge, and dashes in the direction of the dreaded rock, and in spite of all the endeavours of it's would be captor to restrain it, drags the line across the sharp edge, in a moment the gut parts, and our salmon is again free, but with a hook in his jaw. Our *salmo salar* is tempted in his further ascent with flies of every hue, with natural minnows, artificial minnows, spoon baits, large worms, until it arrives at the breeding ground where the modes of capture resorted to by the poacher, and which we described in the previous paper, at times assail this noble fish. Besides what I have enumerated there are other modes resorted to for the capture of salmon.—Coops placed in a river into which the fish enter, but are unable to retreat. Also, under antient royal grants, fixed engines are still allowed, though since the Acts of 1861 and 1865, all other than those under such grants have been declared illegal.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

VI.

Modes of Capture, continued — Size of Mesh — Food of Salmon and Trout — May Fly — Various Descriptions of Nets — Worm Fishing and Fly Fishing contrasted.

I HAVE found that my previous description of the various means devised for the capture of salmon are rather scant, therefore, at the risk of being tedious, I will now venture to enlarge somewhat on that subject. Besides the nets stated in my last paper, where fixed engines are allowed, a net of over one hundred yards is sometimes placed across a channel in the sand, caused by the flow and ebb of the tide. The spot chosen is generally where a little water remains after the tide has gone down. Stakes about seven feet long are driven into the sand to which the top cord of the net is fastened, then lighter sticks or stretchers are attached to the top and bottom cord which keep the net extended. The tide flows, and the net yields to the current, the bottom rising eighteen inches or more, and allowing all fish to pass under. So soon as the water begins to ebb the current presses the net, extended by the stretchers, against the stakes and the bottom cord close to the sand, thus barring the progress of such fish as are inclined to retreat with the tide. It often happens that salmon along with other fish leave the deeper holes during their ascent to the fresh water for the purpose of feeding on the banks whilst the tide is flowing, intending to return and wait for a suitable opportunity of prosecuting their upward journey. These retreating fish finding their way stopped, always seek for the deepest water along the

obstruction, and whilst there is nothing to prevent them from swimming over either bank, and so round the end of the net, they obey their instinct and settle in the lowest part of the channel, remaining their till the fishermen come, who with a draught net secure them. Engines on a large scale are also used, where allowed under conditions named previously. A sloping sandy beach is selected, strong poles are made fast in the sand to which a net seven or eight feet broad is attached at the top, and also at the bottom close to the sand; at the lowest part, generally the nearest to the sea, a large cage is erected which is covered over the top with netting. This cage is so contrived that the fish brought up by the flowing tide and striking the net, seek along the barrier for deeper water, which they find in the opening of the cage on that side; so the returning fish following the same example, seek for safety the opening of the cage on the other side. When once fairly in there is no escape, and the fisherman opening the cage at low water fills his baskets with the contents. These last nets are sometimes a quarter of a mile in length, and it is said they were originated by our Scotch neighbours.

In its full grown state man is not the only captor of salmon. Seals have a great taste for them, and more than one of these singularly interesting creatures have been seen in the estuary of the Kent, evidently attracted by the salmonidæ. Porpoises are well known for their salmon eating propensities—lastly we have the otter which appears to be increasing in numbers throughout the county. The size of the mesh of nets for salmon is fixed by law at eight inches round when wet, but by special application of the Conservators of any district to the Secretary of State, a mesh six inches round can be legalised. A mesh of eight inches round does not usually take fish under three pounds in weight, so that a large number of our morts (*salmo trutta*) and sprods (*salmo albus*) are left for the anglers. Their food in

the sea is, in proportion to their size, the same as that of the salmon, and when they reach the fresh water, worms, minnows, flies, larvæ of aquatic insects, and also the eggs or spawn of their own genus are eagerly devoured.

It is supposed, and with good proof, that the barren and non-breeding fish ascend our rivers in the autumn for the purpose of regaling themselves on the deposited ova. Whether they simply obey their instinct, or accidentally come across this luxury, or they ascend purposely for this end, I am somewhat at a loss to decide — the fact is plain that such fish do appear, and have been caught with roe in their stomachs. In January, 1838, I was fishing about Galla Barrow in the Kent and caught a barren fish in splendid condition with several pellets of salmon roe in its stomach. Who does not when taking a walk along the river bank enjoy watching the trout (*salmo fario*) under the shadow of some tree, rising to the surface and seizing the flies as they alight on the water or are brought down by the current? Watch that well-grown fish, it will weigh over three-quarters of a pound, how intent it is, how eager in its pursuit of food. No insect coming within its reach is allowed to pass. See, it has driven away that smaller trout, being determined to keep master of its position. The trout of our rivers feed on almost every species of animal life which they are capable of devouring. Those located near tidal water luxuriate in shrimps and young flooks, in addition to the *menu* enjoyed by their brethren in the higher reaches. Sometimes like greedy boys their eyes are larger than their throats and stomachs, and we find them choked with bully-frogs — the bullhead or miller's thumb — and one instance has come to my knowledge of a trout about two pounds in weight being found dead, choked with a toad. But whilst gorging themselves with worms, minnows, young samlets and caddis grubs, perfect insect life in the shape of flies imparts richness and flavour to their flesh. Towards the end of

March on bright sunny days, the river is covered with March browns, and then the trout are on the alert. The larvæ of this fly spends its grub state in the river, as spring advances it undergoes a change into a perfect fly, enclosed in a thin brown film. The warm sun causes this to rise, and the instant the film-like case reaches the surface it bursts and out springs the fly expanding its beautifully speckled wings with which it flutters up and down, occasionally alighting on its native element to be snapped up by a hungry fish.

Amidst a great variety of winged food I must only particularize one or two more. At the end of May the stone fly, or our local May fly, emerges from its grub state and forms a delicious and fattening meal for the trout. This grub has a scaly coat and possesses strong mandibles; indeed as a creeper, the name accorded to it by anglers, it is fierce and repulsive in appearance; it is a devourer of the spawn of salmon, trout, and other fish, but they have their revenge by preying upon it whenever it leaves its favourite stone in quest of food. In this larvæ condition anglers use it in some rivers successfully for bait. This insect assumes its perfect state in the scaly covering with which it has hitherto been clothed, and at the end of May emerges therefrom, and crawling upon a dry stone, leaving its empty husk, straightens its beautiful wings, and takes short flights, varying them with an occasional run across a pool, for, like a fish, it is provided with an air bladder; whilst skimming the shallows it is eagerly devoured by the large trout which may often be seen rushing at the insects with their backs out of water. This fly is perhaps the most noted amongst anglers and is used in its natural state.

The bracken-clock, or rose beetle, is perhaps the fly next in importance, though for some years it has not been plentiful. During June, the month for its appearance, trout become gorged with it. The most beautiful species of our ephemera, the green and grey drakes, must not be forgotten,

and I may refer thereto in my remarks on char. Wherever food, especially insect life, abounds in a river, thither will trout congregate, so when the trees overhanging some favourite resort are removed, the trout, finding the caterpillars, spiders, and other similar creatures ceasing to drop and the flies also diminishing in number, a decided alteration in the population may be noticed, which is soon observed by the angler. But though this portion of the subject is not quite exhausted, I must pass on to the means of capture. The river Eden, with its tributaries, is under the Solway Act (passed about 1806). That Act ordains the mesh of a net for trout to be five inches round when wet, or four inches *between* knot and knot. This mesh applied when the Act became law, not only to trout but to the migratory salmonidæ. By the Salmon Act of 1861 that portion relating to the migratory salmonidæ was repealed, leaving a net with the mesh I have stated applicable for trout. As this Act embraces the tributaries to the Solway only, we must look for some other legal net, by which trout may be captured in the various rivers and lakes other than those in the Solway watershed.

At present I will leave Windermere aside. By an Act, 1st of Elizabeth chap. 17, it is ordained that trout shall be caught by no other ways or means but by a net two and a half inches broad, angling excepted. Now we may fairly conclude that this Act intends the mesh to be one inch and a quarter between knot and knot, measuring over the top of the knots, thus making it the same as in the Solway Act — five inches round when wet. I know of no other net indicated as legal than this, and on the whole the size of the mesh is fair. The nets in use for catching trout in the Solway watershed are:— the ordinary draught net; the set or striking net, which is at times placed in certain bays on Ullswater and allowed to hang during nights when there is no moon, the fish moving about in search of food, strike the net and get fastened in

the meshes, where they hang till removed by the fisherman ; the shoulder or flood net — locally cowl net — is also another legal engine in that district. A violent thunderstorm accompanied by heavy rain occurs, suddenly the river is swollen and its muddy waters fill the banks, the fish betake themselves to the little bays and nooks along the edge so as to escape the current and also to be ready to seize the worms and other food brought down by the flood. The net from three to four feet long and two feet wide, two feet deep, according to the fancy of the owner, is attached to a wooden frame to which is fastened a stout ash pole, with this the trout assembled in the bays and nooks as described, and unable to see the net as it descends, are literally scooped out of the water. Here let me say that trout caught thus will have an earthy flavour when cooked.

Nets with armour, much used by poachers, are illegal for the capture of salmonidæ. As some of your readers may be interested in the description of an armour net, I give the following : — The net, or sarking, is made of thread known as tailor's thread, with a mesh seven-eighths of an inch. This sarking is hung in a net made of strong threefold twine, with a mesh of about five inches. The fish passing through the wide mesh in front come in contact with the sarking, which, hanging loosely, gives way and is carried along with the fish through the wide mesh at the opposite side, thus forming a pocket in which the fish is taken.

Apart from the fisheries on Windermere, angling is the great medium for the capture of trout away from the Solway watershed. I do not think it needful to describe the various modes of angling. Some praise the minnow, some the worm, as we may judge by the following stanza by a Northumberland angler : —

> Ye may sing o' red heckles an' May flies forby,
> Your lang casts and fine i' the Spring ;
> But a bonnie red worm i' bright June let me try
> And to bank fast the trouties I'll bring.

Fly fishing merits the enconiums passed upon it for generations, and though our Northumberland friend, giving play to irony, puts a song in the mouth of the wife of a brother angler who has accompanied her husband on one of his fly fishing expeditions, from which I give the following stanza : —

> Ye brought me to Cocquet to gi'e me a treat,
> An' I canna' but say we've had plenty to eat,
> But as for the whuskey—ye ken whae's had that
> And yer fishin's a' meunshine, I'll just tell ye flat
> Potterin' on, Potterin' on—
> Ye've no catch't a troot a' day, potterin' on.

I heartily uphold that section of the science of angling classified as fly fishing. With all due deference to those lovers of the gentle art who cultivate fishing with the worm, I am convinced that fly fishing encourages a more elevating influence on the character. Having now described the various species of our salmonidæ, and given some details of the habits, food, and mode of capture of salmon — salmon trout and trout — I will, if not wearisome to my readers, place before them in my next paper a few facts relating to char, and then proceed to the last division of my subject concerning the protection of the various kinds of salmonidæ at present found in our rivers and lakes.

N.B.—All the fish in our rivers are devourers of the spawn of the salmonidæ, and salmon roe is one of the most destructive baits an angler can use. By the Salmon Act of 1861, a penalty of 40*s.* can be inflicted on any one fishing with salmon roe or having it in his possession except for the purpose of artificial propagation.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

VII.

Lath Fishing as formerly practised, with Description of Windermere — Char Fishing — Plumb Line — Trolling Rods — Charms of Friendship.

I WILL now say a few words about the favourite flies used on our lakes by anglers. The green and grey drake proceed from a water nympha, and appear from about the middle of May to the middle of June. The artificial flies made to represent them are full large for use on our smaller streams, but during a nice breeze on a lake trout take them greedily; in fact, when the day is favourable the angler may expect first-rate sport. On Ullswater, in its palmy days for the angler, the fisherman counted his trout brought home by the dozen—six, seven, or eight dozen — caught principally with the green and grey drake and the bracken-clock. Many an angler can also look back with pleasure on the days spent on Windermere during the few weeks these flies were on the water.

Embarking in his boat at Bowness, a gentle breeze ruffling the surface of the lake, the lath or otter with its ten flies was launched, and the line looped on to the mast. The oars, hitherto managed by the attendant, are given up to the angler, who guides his course so that the line runs over the banks and shallows. Now he sees some large boulders in the water, and by a skilful movement causes the lath to run close round them, keeping his main line well up, the flies dancing on the waves. Up jumps a fish taking the line down with it, and making the boat quiver. Presently it gives a high

leap and reveals a lovely trout, of two pounds weight at least. The line is skilfully handled, and, finally, after many attempts of the fish to escape, during which time the hopes and fears of the angler alternate, the prize is secured, and the line again extended for a fresh capture. To what beautiful scenery did this mode of fishing introduce us as the boat glided slowly into the lovely bays and skirted the various islands, some clad with luxuriant foliage, under which was a carpet of primroses and wild hyacinths ; others rocky and picturesque in form ; or, on rounding a headland, to behold the magnificent background formed by the Langdale Pikes, Loughrigg, Fairfield, Nab Scar, and other well-known mountains, leaving pictures on the imagination which are lasting sources of pleasure. I must crave the indulgence of my readers for this digression, and I think when I inform them that this mode of angling for salmon, trout, and char is now forbidden by our Legislature, they will pardon my having, in the course of details important to my subject, recalled for a moment the pleasures of the past.

Often having been in company with gentlemen anglers who, to my surprise, were ignorant of the form of the lath or otter, I will proceed to describe it, and in doing so may possibly occupy more space than I should otherwise do, were I to content myself with quoting the curt definition thereof given by my much lamented friend, the late Frank Buckland, viz.: "A small stick used for running out bait, acting on the same principle as a kite in the air." A piece of deal board, half-an-inch thick, twenty inches long, eight inches deep, with a leaden keel of about an inch in depth, so that when immersed in water the board sunk to within an inch of the top, painted to fancy, but using white or red for the part above water. The ends were left square or sloped towards the keel according to the wish of the owner—strings were then so attached that the line was easily tied in such a position as when the lath was drawn through the water its

course was diagonal; and upon the stringing of a lath the comfort and success of the user greatly depended. If it ran hard the fish broke the drop lines, and on the contrary, if too easily the main line trailed in the water. Though I have given the above form and dimensions, the inclination or convenience of the angler varied both according to circumstances, so long as the needful effect was attained. For use from a boat a line about fifty yards was found a convenient length, the droppers for the flies were attached to swivels, each confined on the line between two little balls of gutta-percha about the size of small peas. A knot in the line at the outside of each ball kept them in their places. By this arrangement the line, moving easily in the loop of the swivel, did not when the tension varied become entangled with the droppers. About nine feet space was left between each of the droppers, the length of the latter increasing from six feet, the one nearest to the lath, to twelve feet next the boat. The line was looped on to a stout ash stick or mast eight feet high, the foot of which was placed in a socket in the boat which was quietly pulled with the oars just sufficiently quickly so as to keep the main line out of the water and the flies moving. As I have previously stated, in fishing thus for trout the dexterity of the angler consisted in regulating the speed of the boat and guiding it so as to make the lath carry the line over the favourite haunts and feeding ground of the fish. A light flat wooden reel, with cork on the edges, was provided, upon which the line was wound when not in use, and though to persons unaccustomed to this particular mode of fishing, a frequent entanglement may seem to have been probable, I can assure them, except when caught in a violent gust whilst the line was loose in the boat, such a diaster was rare. All went smoothly. For mountain tarns and for fishing from the shores of lakes a much longer line and larger number of flies were used—also for ease in carrying, a folding lath was employed.

Alas, an engine more cumbersome to manage and more destructive to the interests of the fishermen generally has replaced the lath, — I mean the cross line licensed under the Salmon Fisheries Act, to which engine I may hereafter refer.

But I must hasten on to char (*salmo salvelinus*). The habits of this fish, which is so elegant in form and beautiful in colour, vary materially from those of the salmon and trout species. Char love the deepest part of the lakes which they inhabit. Their food consists chiefly of the smaller forms of animal life; at the same time it is evident that they do not despise a more substantial diet when they swim by chance across the shallows where they meet with minnows and small perch. Mr. Jackson, of Southport, stated before the Fishery Commissioners at Bowness, in February, 1878, that he had taken a perch three inches long out of the stomach of a char.

However, it seems clear that it is not the habit of these fish to go like trout, when their feeding time comes, on to the banks and shallows to seek their sustenance. They also keep in shoals — occasionally they rise at the natural fly. They are not so dependent as trout on streams for their spawning ground, though any one taking a walk during the first fortnight in October up the Brathay past the chapel towards Skelwith Fold may, if the day is fine, witness a pretty sight. On looking into the river he will see the bottom of it covered with char busily engaged spawning, their silvery and vermilion tints glistening in the bright sun.

The bulk, however, of those in Windermere spawn in the lake, some in very deep water, but the larger number on the banks. I am in possession of no information as to whether those in Haweswater make their breeding ground in the stream or lake. Those formerly in Ullswater used to frequent Glenridding Beck until the water from the mines

rendered it untenable. The season for catching these fish begins in March and ends on the 2nd October. The net used, in the early part of the season especially, is a draught net with a bag in the centre sunk close to the bottom of the lake, the corks on the top cord keeping it extended in an upright position. The top of the net may be many feet below the surface of the water, but the fishermen do not fear the char rising and so swimming over it. When the sun gets more powerful the char come nearer the top, and the draught net then used is suspended from the surface by corks, and the lower portion does not touch the bottom until it is being drawn ashore by the fishermen. As the bag is always in the deepest water, so the char obeying their natural instinct seek refuge therein.

Except for salmon, no rule with respect to the size of mesh of nets for trout and char in Windermere has hitherto been adopted. I am glad to say that an Act was passed during the present Session, 1884, ordering the minimum size to be one inch between knot and knot.

As the spring advances lines are used. Formerly the lath with five drop lines, varying in length from ten to thirty yards, and artificial baits which spun round as the boat moved were in vogue; also the plumb line, as at present licensed, of the following description — a leaden or iron weight sufficient for the purpose is fastened to a strong cord about the size of thick whipcord; to this five cross lines of different lengths are attached, the lowest is the shortest; these lines have artificial baits of bright metal, sometimes one side either brown or scarlet. A silver and gold coloured bait is in favour. When the plumb is lowered and the boat moves the baits spin. The droppers vary from ten to twenty yards in length; the lowest may sink forty or sixty feet or even deeper than that. Trolling lines from single rods with fifty yards of line to each, and with either natural minnows or baits as described above, all spinning. I will give a description

of a char boat belonging to and as used by a well-known and keen angler on Windermere, and it shall be in his own words before her Majesty's Inspectors in February, 1878. "I fish with two plumb lines, two laths, and two trolling rods, in all sixteen baits." My readers will not be surprised when I tell them what he caught. In 1863, 509 trout and char, and I ought to add this was accomplished during his leisure hours. Probably many of the trout would weigh between one and three pounds. The present mode of fishing for char on Windermere—apart from nets—is by the plumb line and trolling line. Instead of skirting the bays and recesses of the lake, the angler for char keeps his boat moving in the open and deep water. The size of the fish so taken varies from 5 ounces to 1 pound in weight, and occasionally to 1½ pounds.

When the lath was allowed excellent sport was obtained by fishermen-visitors with the artificial fly, as during the month of May, should the atmosphere be favourable, char at times rise freely. The char in Haweswater are usually of smaller size than those in Windermere. Occasional draughts are taken by the net for the use of the noble proprietor. He also gives leave on application to anglers with the rod, who frequently make fair baskets of both trout and char.

In taking leave of this portion of my subject –the mode of capture—I cannot but record the fact that in penning the various details my thoughts have often wandered over the past, recalling days spent with genial companions, who, whilst eagerly following their fascinating sport, were keenly alive to the beauties of Nature and the charm of friendship. How delightful was the stroll to our fishing ground, and how pleasant were our evenings after the labours of the day were over. No selfishness, no attempt to get the first cast on a favourite pool. If either of us lost a good fly the other always did his best to repair the disaster. One of the friends with whom I fished for twenty-five years often said when we

reached the riverside,— "Now, if thou wilt take that stream I will fish the other, and mind what thou art about, for it is a *smittle* spot," and so we proceeded till it was time to return, and then we each counted our gains, which were generally about equal. But two of those of whom I have spoken are gone from this earth I hope to a better land.

In my next paper I intend dealing with a somewhat intractable subject—protection and utilisation.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

VIII.

Acts for the Protection of Salmonidæ — Great Productiveness under Proper Care — Breeding Ponds.

THE ruling powers in this country have found it needful for many centuries to protect those *ferœ naturæ* which provide the population with good and wholesome food, and in this category salmon and trout are included. In the 13th century it appears from our ancient records that in certain districts selfishness so far overcame the desire for the public weal, that a section of the population had adopted the plan of catching salmon in the breeding season, whereby the rivers were becoming bare of that valuable fish. In so serious a light was this viewed by the reigning monarch, Edward I., that a Royal Act was passed inflicting heavy penalties on all who took salmon in the breeding season.

In the 14th century weirs greatly impeded the ascent of salmon to the spawning grounds, so an act was passed in the reign of Edward III., authorising "New weirs to be pulled down and not to be repaired."

At the close of the 14th century Richard II. ordered that "Justices of the Peace shall be Conservators of the statutes made touching salmon."

So important has the Legislature considered the protection of the salmonidæ in our waters to be, that the subject was often before them, as fresh modes of capture were invented. Nets placed across rivers were forbidden by Henry II. Amongst many other Acts I will at present content myself with referring to one passed in the reign of

William and Mary, giving power to search all persons who were suspected of having fish illegally captured in their possession.

The Scotch Kings passed most stringent laws touching salmon, enacting that all who killed a salmon in the breeding time should forfeit their lives. The Romans also found it needful to give protection to the oyster beds, which supplied Rome with that luxury.

More than twenty of our Acts for the preservation of salmon were entirely repealed by the Salmon Fisheries Act of 1861, and several others partially so. The only old Acts in force applicable to the County of Westmorland, so far as I know, are 1 Elizabeth, cap. 17, and 44 Geo. III. cap. 45, both relating to trout. The Salmon Act of 1861 has been amended by those of 1865, 1873, 1876, and the Freshwater Fisheries Acts of 1878 and 1884.

Prior to 1861 the salmon fisheries of this country were rapidly decreasing in value, but in a few years, with the beneficial powers of the Act of 1865, a marked improvement was noted in many rivers. The take at the mouth of the Tyne was enormously increased, and now, where the fishing was formerly confined within a narrow compass, a large fleet of boats at Cullercoats are engaged during the season, sending many thousands of salmon yearly to London. The rivers in Westmorland also shew an increase, which would be more conspicuous if some impediments were modified in the Kent, and if the Lune were efficiently protected. The Eden, flowing partially through this county, has always been an important salmon river.

The protection due to trout and char was, after much labour on the part of those interested, granted by the Act of 1873, and perfected by those of 1878 and 1884. If our rivers and lakes, wherein such an amount of valuable food is produced, were left to be dealt with at the discretion of the various proprietors, what a scene of confusion

and loss would ensue. One owner says, "I want money, and money I will have. Trout on my property are worth 1*s.* per lb., so I'll get them," and to work he goes with a small meshed net which, it being the month of April, takes all the smoults as well as trout. When he has cleared all out he awaits a "fresh" and goes at it again. As the breeding season approaches his water becomes again stocked with ascending fish, and again are they drawn out and taken to market. Other proprietors following his example, in two or three years fish become scarce and complaint is made of the manner in which he has acted. "Oh," he says in reply, "I have only taken my own fish; I would advise you to do the same." When autumnal tints clothe the trees, trout and a portion of the char, leaving their homes in the lakes and in the rivers, are congregated in the smaller streams to lay the foundation of a future supply. Then, were there no protection, the unscrupulous householder might seize the opportunity of sweeping them off by wholesale, and salting them down for winter use. Alas, this is no imaginary picture, prior to the Acts of 1873 and 1878, instances of such a practice are on record. It is well-known that char used to be caught for potting during the winter months when they assembled on the banks to spawn. It was urged that they were in season. However, thanks be to the legislature for providing a close time for trout and char during the breeding season, thus preserving them at that important time, and allowing them to lay the seeds of a progeny by which the waters may be replenished. Some of our rivers shew the benefit of this, and the result as respects char has even been more striking.

It must be palpable to anyone who will give the subject of protection to our salmonidæ his careful thought that if a river or lake is to be beneficially utilised as regards its fish supply, unanimity must exist amongst the proprietors. All but one may be agreed, but the divergance of that one

may bring ruin to the rest. Now, the government of this country has from the earliest times appreciated the importance of fish as contributing a valuable adjunct to the food of the inhabitants, and whilst fully recognising proprietary rights, it has wisely ordered that such rights should be so exercised that not only the riparian owners, but also the public generally should be benefitted. So our legislature convinced of the utter impossibility of riparian owners acting with unanimity in organising protection to the salmonidæ in their lakes and rivers, have passed certain "Acts" for that purpose, and to the end that the intention of the government may be efficiently carried out, powers are given under those acts for providing the means of according the needful protection.

So all who enter the list, whether as fishermen with the net, or with the rod where such protection under the act is established have to contribute their quota in the shape of a license fee towards defraying the cost of such organisation. The wisdom of this step approves itself to our judgment when we bear in mind that the Government must either depute powers to the Conservators to raise the required funds by license fees, or they must find the money, in which case we know what will follow. The whole system of Conservancy will be managed by a Board in London, from whom officers for each district and orders will emanate.

Having now shown the need of protection, and also given a general description of the means authorised by the Government whereby our salmonidæ may not only be preserved from ruthless destruction, but also be made subservient to the wants of our increasing population, provided we carry out those means in the spirit in which they were devised by our Legislature, I will pass on to the last head of my subject, namely, utilization.

Man was placed in this world by God, and endowed with power over all inferior creatures. They are subservient to

his purposes. If he wilfully misuse them, deprivation and suffering follow. On the contrary, if he exercises his faculties aright, he will do his best to encourage the production of those which are needful for his support. Our rivers and lakes are tenanted by animal life in the shape of fish, just as our pastures are with cattle, and are all capable of improvement. We have well-known instances of this. From careful observation it was assumed by Mr. Ashworth, who out of love to the cause of pisciculture took a fishery in Galway, that not one egg out of a thousand, spawned in a river, produced a marketable salmon. In the first place, twenty-five per cent. of the eggs deposited are at once washed down the stream to be devoured by an army of young and non-breeding fish, attracted to the breeding ground apparently by the smell of the salmon roe.

One gentleman caught a large trout on the spawning beds with six hundred salmon ova in its stomach. Then again, a large per centage of the eggs do not get fertilised. There are also the heavy floods which roll boulders over the reds or spawning beds, crushing and disturbing the ova. In times of excessive drought the spawning beds of our rivers, ere the young fry are hatched, are occasionally left dry. To add to the above list of casualties, the larvæ of the stone fly and dragon fly are great devourers of the eggs. To give one instance, — 70,000 ova were deposited in a beautifully clear stream well suited to the purpose, and when the time for hatching came not one fish turned out; every egg was eaten by the larvæ of the dragon fly. After the fish are hatched, and whilst swimming in the quiet water encumbered for about three weeks with their umbilical appendages, they are eagerly swallowed by various waterfowl. Those which escape and frequent the more rapid water have also enemies in the larger trout, and occasionally in boys and men. I do not enlarge on their dangers in the sea; that forms no portion of my subject now. Sufficient has been adduced to

prove the enormous loss existing between the depositing of the ova and the exodus of the smoults to the sea.

Mr. Ashworth, being convinced that this loss might be greatly modified, instituted breeding streams or ponds, and the result was striking. In 1853 he took 1,601 salmon; in 1855, 5,540; 1858, 9,639; and in 1864, 20,512. Mr. Buist, adopting a similar plan on the Tay, at Stormontfield, near Perth, was gratified by similar results. In eleven years the rental of the Tay rose from 8,715*l.* to 15,000*l.* Wherever this system has been carried out, under favourable conditions as to situation, like results have followed.

I ought perhaps to state that the breeding ponds are made especially for the purpose, guarded from the dangers which I have just narrated, and with a constant supply of clear water. They are also carefully watched, and so soon as the young fish are hatched they are regularly fed with hard eggs well pounded, and after being moistened squeezed through muslin; this is supplemented as they get larger by stronger food, such as liver. When the time arrives for them to journey seaward they assume their bright silvery attire and depart — some weighing about 2oz. were marked, and left May 24, were afterwards caught on their return from the sea in August weighing from five to nine pounds.

IX.

Obstructions Adverse to the Increase of Fish — Various Detrimental Matters — Upper Part of the Lune — Johnny and his Call — The Howgill Poet — Adventures of the Howgill Poet — His Escape from Drowning, &c.

Other instances of the successful artificial hatching of salmon could be given both in this country and on the continent, in fact it is only a section of the great system of pisciculture which was adopted by the Egyptians. China, with its teeming population, has for centuries paid great attention to its fish supply, and our continental neighbours have large establishments where the breeding of fish is successfully practised; but I must confine myself to salmonidæ, and delineate some of those properties of lakes and rivers, favourable or otherwise, for the cultivation of that species. In the first place, assuming that the course of a river is generally over a rocky and gravelly bed, free access should exist between the upper waters and the sea. All natural impediments should be modified either by alteration, by fish passes, or by removal. Every weir difficult of ascent should have a fish pass, as a rule, at one side, with the entrance resting, if possible, in the deepest portion of the stream as it runs from the obstruction. When the pass is in the centre of the weir the fish are apt to swim past it to the deeper water which is often found just under the fall.

Examples of this may be seen in Underbarrow, where some perpendicular weirs have been erected with a narrow

sloping space in the middle, up which the fish can get, but a great proportion of them go beyond the slope to under the fall, over which they cannot leap, and whilst floundering about seeking where they can ascend they are easily captured with a net illegally used. Sawdust from mills occupied in the manufacture of wooden articles is exceedingly detrimental, the small particles impeding the action of the delicate tissue of the gills. Neither cinders nor the ashes of coal or other refuse should be thrown into streams.

When all the impediments alluded to have been removed, the river may be subjected to what is commonly designated accidental poisoning. So far as Westmorland is concerned this may be caused by the waste liquor from paper works, or the contents of a dye pan being allowed to run into the river, either of which, but particularly the former, may destroy not only the whole of the salmonidæ but also the aquatic insects on which they feed for over a distance of two miles.

The lint contained in the refuse water flowing from paper mills, and which often saturates the stream to such an extent as to clog the flies of the angler, is also very injurious to the breathing process in fish. There are other disasters so purely accidental, such as the bursting of a cask of kreosote whilst in transit on the railway, as not to demand further comment.

I may also mention in connection with the utilisation of fish a practice which has obtained for generations, I mean that of damming up a small stream in order to create a pool deep enough for sheep washing. The dirty water as it flows along causes the fish to come to the surface, when they are easily caught by the youths always in attendance on those occasions. This may appear at first sight only trivial, but we must remember that these small streams are the nurseries from which our rivers and lakes are supplied with their

population, and that a large number of those so taken, if allowed to follow their natural instinct, would shortly become of great value as food. The importance of leaving these fish in the water is apparent, because, though made sick they soon recover from the effects of the poisonous matter on getting into a clearer element.

The river Lune, which runs a great part of its course through Westmorland, is naturally an excellent example of a river favourable to the breeding and growth of salmonidæ. The hand of man has, however, placed a barrier not far from the tidal water which exercises an adverse influence on its welfare. Passing by this, no other obstruction is found in the main stream up to its source, a distance of nearly forty miles. Its bed is rocky and gravelly, and with an admirable variety of torrent, stream, and pool. Now we come to a stretch of deep water flowing quietly amidst banks shaded with trees, then to a sharp turn round which the water swirls, a series of gravel beds follow, over which the stream trickles and murmurs, and in the deeper portions of which are favourite haunts of smoults and trout. A rocky bed is now approached, over which the water roars and foams, or confined between the walls of a deep fissure worn by ages to an unseen depth, glides along with majestic dignity. As I endeavour to pourtray a general idea of the Lune, the special features of well known spots are present to my mind, some calling to remembrance occurrences of varied interest, and the whole hallowed by the recollections of happy days spent with friends now gone. Arriving near the foot of the Hole House estate, we see the "loups," celebrated by the amusing incident of Johnny and his calf. Johnny could easily jump over, but was not so sure of the calf; he made up his mind that whatever became of them they must both go together, and so it used to be a saying, they must go together like Johnny and the calf. In that neighbourhood, at the edge of a rapid is a "kettle," worn by stones and

gravel revolving quickly round, which is used by the fish for a resting place. Holeford comes next in view as we ascend, a lovely bit of water for the angler and the painter, then a rapid between rocks over which a ladder was placed. The Howgill shepherd poet was returning one day from overseeing his flock, and when he reached this rustic bridge, the water was dashing against it, being swollen by heavy rain. However, sooner than go several miles round, he attempted the passage, and when half way the ladder broke, and he was carried rapidly down by the torrent. He could not swim, but his presence of mind did not forsake him, and he remembered Holeford, about 60 yards below, where he thought he should get a footing. Down he went with great velocity between the rocks into the pool at the foot of which is the ford, and soon his feet touched the gravel bed. He made a violent effort and reached the bank, where he lay exhausted for nearly half an hour before he could resume his journey home, about three quarters of a mile distant. Passing by the willow bed foot with its boulders, we come to Chapel Beck, where there is a ford and a magnificent gravel bed on which our poet one day went to fish. As he was leaving his house near Howgill Chapel, his wife Betty, who was a careful soul, called out, "Richard, you must not wade in those new shoes." Now Richard in his poetry appeared to hold what he considered his right place, but in practice was amenable to the gentle influence of his wife, as our tale will show. On reaching the bank he took off both shoes and stockings, placing the latter in the former, and left them near the side, and wading across the foot of Chapel Beck, prosecuted his raid on the trout which, there having been some rain, were strong on the feed. Though the day was fine, some heavy clouds had burst on the east part of the Howgill Fells, and the water began to rise. He was stocking his pannier so fast that he was oblivious to his surroundings. At last one large trout gave him a dance, and when

he had secured it he gave a glance round, and his eyes caught sight of his shoes just afloat and ready for a voyage. "What will Betty say?" shot through his mind like a dart, and heedless of the pain which the pebbles occasioned, he ran across the gravel bed and plunged through Chapel Beck just in time to seize the wanderers, which he held up in triumph, at the same time exclaiming "What would Betty have said?"

Ulleswheel comes next and rouses incidents in my remembrance. It is a glorious pool for salmon trout and smoults. I must, however, to my tale, and leave the nomenclature of the various "dubs," "nooks," and "wheels," all replete with what is needful for the growth of salmonidæ, as well as with grateful memories of the past.

The Lune, which has also many affluents, nearly all accessible to fish almost up to their source, is an excellent example of a river adapted to the production and growth of migratory and non-migratory salmonidæ.

The Kent, with its several tributaries, has one natural impediment not far from the mouth, which might be still further alleviated so as to make the ascent easier. The other obstructions are the work of man. Naturally it is an excellent fish producing river, and were the hindrances relieved to a reasonable extent, I have no doubt it would soon be well stocked, like the Underbarrow Pool, with salmon and salmon trout.

All the rivers and lakes of Westmorland which have not been spoiled by man are favourable to the growth of salmonidæ, the properties of which vary according as they are affected by the different strata over which the water flows. Thus in the Eden, especially between the junction with the Eamont and Appleby, the trout are large, well fed, and their skin has often a slight yellow tinge. The abundance and variety of food, including an extraordinary supply of insect life, adds richness to their flesh.

The upper waters of the Lune, with the exception of the Birkbeck, which flows past Shap Wells, are extremely clear, and the fish are generally bright in colour and sweet in flavour, but of a smaller size than those in the Eden. So there are peculiarities belonging to those in the Kent, each affluent showing a difference of strata, which acts not only on the colour but also on the size and delicacy of the fish. Some of the trout caught in St. Sunday's Beck are pictures of beauty.

The size of trout does not depend so much upon the volume of water in a river as on how that volume is appropriated. If the course is rapid, and devoid of resting places, that is not a favourable condition for the production of large well fed fish, and would not answer the purpose of the breeder of trout. On the contrary, a smaller stream — a mixture of torrent and deep pools, long and gravelly reaches, occasionally overhung with trees, will afford to the angler baskets of much finer trout, and will realise the hopes of the pisciculturist.

The increase of char in Windermere, under the protection authorised by the Freshwater Fisheries Bill of 1878, is a proof of what can be accomplished by attention to the laws of nature. Artificial breeding of that species has not been carried on there lately. It might, however, be successfully managed, as no doubt exists that a large proportion of their ova deposited in the lake is destroyed by other fish, and by aquatic insects.

As respects our salmon, I wish a greater union of interest existed between the upper and lower proprietors, then a more complete supervision could be effected, as all the owners and occupiers of breeding streams would be anxious to protect the spawning fish, and thus largely extend the production of this most valuable denizen of our rivers.

The supply of trout might be greatly enlarged by aiding

their ascent to the breeding grounds, the withholding of deleterious matter from our streams, and by artificial propagation.

There are many points connected with this interesting subject which I must leave for the present, as the needful details would be inconvenient in a general description, but what I have adduced will, I hope, have shewn that it is the duty, not only of the executive to carry out the laws, but also of the public generally, by exercising a judicious and honest course of action, to aid in the utilisation of such a valuable store of food as exists in our migratory and non-migratory salmonidæ.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

X.

"Need Fire" — Remarkable Thunderstorm — The Howgill Poet at Borrow Bridge — Increase of Fish in Loch Leven.

THE angler in the pursuit of his avocation is brought into contact with the varied charms of nature. The early walk when the grass is resplendent with dewdrops and the feathered songsters are pouring forth their morning orisons, imparts a zest to the day. As he proceeds, different phases of animal life are visible. Now a pheasant runs along, or up spring a couple of partridges. The birds are busy either building their nests or feeding their young. He also enlarges his acquaintance with man and his surroundings, and so gains a knowledge of what passes in other spheres beside his own. About forty-five years ago a murrain ravaged the Howgill district. So severe was it that the inhabitants in the southern portion resolved upon trying the effect of "Need fire," and accordingly procured it by rubbing two sticks together till they ignited, and a fire was lit in the fold belonging the farm where the experiment was commenced, and the cattle were driven through the smoke. A brand or peat or a light of some kind obtained at that fire was then carried to the next farm-house, and so on in neighbour row, the process of smoking the cows being adopted at each place. If any one declined it, the charm was broken. At half-past twelve one night the inmates living at Howgill Mill were aroused by a tap at the window; they slept on the ground floor. William jumped out of bed and exclaimed, "What's the matter?" A voice answered, "William, you

must get up; t'Need fire's come, and you must smoke your kie." William replied, "I don't believe in your Need fire." After being again urged to be quick, without effect, his wife said, "My dear, if thou does not believe in Need fire, thy neighbours do, and it will be a pity to disappoint them." So he dressed himself, and smoked his cows. He accompanied the party with the fire to the next farm, where they were gladly received. "Oh," said the farmer, whom I shall call John, "I'm reet fain it hes come," and turning to his wife, told her to put out every spark of fire in the house, or the charm would fail. The fire was lit in the fold, and the cows turned out, but William, seeing his neighbour looking "glum," said, "John, what is the matter?" "Oh! William, I'm afraid my offering isn't accepted." "Why, what's to do?" "Well, there's no smoke." "Oh!" replied William, "if that's all, I'll soon cure it." Seizing a fork, he threw a lot of wet straw on the fire, which raised a smoke to his heart's content, and John smoked his cows in triumph.

On the 8th of August, 1855, peals of distant thunder from the north-east were heard in Kendal, accompanied with a few drops of rain, but the traveller proceeding through Grayrigg to Borrow Bridge might have witnessed a storm of thunder, lightning, and rain more severe than any within the recollection of the oldest inhabitant. A cloud black as ink settled on the Howgill Fells about eight in the morning, from which darted vivid flashes of lightning, accompanied by loud thunder and a deluge of rain. Two shepherds, who were out on the top above Carlingill, said the rain was dreadful; they scarcely knew what they were doing. The water rushed down the sides of the hills in torrents, bringing stones and soil on the enclosed land, as may be now seen above High Carlingill, the property of Mr. Edward Branthwaite, several acres being covered with *debris* on which no grass grows. The road along the Lune, between Carlingill and Borrow Bridge, for a long distance was completely

blocked, being in some places level with the top of the wall. The small becks became rivers, carrying all before them, the one just above Lune's Bridge bringing trees along with the masses of earth and stone, which it deposited in the Lune just like a "tip" in the formation of a railway, and, though what impeded the river course has been washed away, enough remains on the bank to be a lasting memorial of the storm. Many trout were found in the fields, having been completely washed out by the violence of the torrents. More than one instance occurred of persons being unable to reach their homes in consequence of the rivulets becoming rapids. Some of those more immediately affected by it, thought the end of all things was come. Garsdale had a like visitation the same day.

Our salmonidæ suffered greatly. For miles the bed of the Lune was covered with small stones, gravel, and sammel, which choked up the ordinary resting places of the fish, as well as destroying numbers of them, and it was long ere the river bed assumed its wonted form.

Our Howgill poet, who was a shepherd as well as the most noted angler in his district, occasionally looked in to see his friend John Noble, who kept the well-furnished hostelry at Borrow Bridge. The poet, after placing his rod against the side of the house by the porch and proceeding to the kitchen, was graciously welcomed by that most kind and thrifty landlady, Mrs. Noble, who at once offered him the arm chair, and supplied him with such refreshment as he required. Now our hero, though born in Howgill, and where his early years were spent principally in looking after his father's large stock of sheep, had also been a cotton spinner at Royton, and had obtained some distinction there as a volunteer in the local Militia. He was also an earnest advocate of free-trade, and contributed some good articles on that subject, which appeared in one of our Kendal newspapers, prior to the passing of the Bill admitting corn into

this country free. Whether it was the result of his military training I am not prepared to say, but, though a man of peace, he loved to see a good stand up fight, and even his strong inclination towards angling fell to the ground when faced with the prospect of viewing a good round battle with fists.

Now it chanced one day when he was occupying the arm-chair at Borrow Bridge, and enjoying the good cheer of the hostess, he was accosted by a man who, along with other companions, was also staying there. It appears this company had been larking, and one of their amusements had consisted in fighting. This man came squaring up to our poet, who exclaimed "What do you want?" "Richard, I want you to fight, they've all foughten, and now its your turn." The two finally went out on the front, and our poet again asked him what he wanted. "I want you to fight;" and when this was refused he inquired the reason. "Well," said Richard, "I'm not going to fight, for if I beat thee I shall add nothing to my honour, and if thou beats me my reputation is gone for ever, for thou art only a tailor!"

Leaving the shepherd poet, and the charming locality in which he resided, with its mountain becks, wooded ravines, and picturesque river, I will travel across the country to Windermere in order that I may expatiate somewhat on the capabilities of that magnificent sheet of water, our largest English lake, which I am proud to say is in the township of Applethwaite, in the county of Westmorland. As I have previously observed, this lake contains a good store of char, some trout, probably a number of *salmo ferox*, and according to the late Dr. Davy, a few of the beautiful vendace. Salmon and salmon trout frequent it in the summer and autumn, and make use of its tributaries at the breeding season.

I think it must be apparent to all that since protection was accorded to char, they are on the increase in Winder-

mere, and, whilst a system of artificial hatching might further augment the supply, I do not at present consider that they call for further remark.

The case is very different with the trout *(salmo fario)*, they cannot be under equal supervision in the breeding streams, and frequenting the banks and shallower portions of the lake when they feed they are more easily caught with the net. I am also informed that large numbers are captured by night lines, but of this I have no proof. It is sufficient for my purpose to know that the shallow parts and the banks, which ought to swarm with fine trout, are almost denuded of that, in every way, valuable fish.

I suppose Windermere contains at least fifteen square miles of water. Loch Leven, Kinross, Scotland, a loch containing about six square miles of water, twenty years ago though possessing a breed of splendid trout, was, owing to reckless netting and poaching, almost cast aside by anglers as unworthy of their notice. A company, however, was formed with an enterprising manager, and a dozen watchers were employed to protect the tributaries, and netting was discontinued, except under special circumstances. Very soon it became again stocked with trout of all sizes up to six pounds. Prior to this change two boats only were required. In 1873 twenty-two boats were in active requisition, the anglers taking 17,000 trout, averaging nearly one pound each. This has continued with such variations as may be expected from natural causes, up to the present time, the numbers in 1881 being 14,000, weighing 16,000 pounds. The price was 1*s.* 6*d.* per lb. for some years. Fishing is principally with the fly, and occasionally the minnow is used. If a similar plan were adopted for Windermere, it would soon abound with splendid trout, which would thrive rapidly on the bountiful store of aquatic insects, thus utilising a considerable portion of the lake at present almost barren of fish, at the same time giving profitable occupation to a large

number of boatmen, pleasure to the angling section of the public, business to the hotel keepers, and producing a valuable supply of excellent food.

Some may cry out against such a project and say it is impossible; how can we prevent the young trout being caught by the many juvenile anglers before the fish leave the streams for the lake? Moreover, what are we to do when drawing the char net to bank, can we avoid taking the trout? My reply is this—Let some breeding ponds for trout be established from which many thousands of young fish can be sent into the lake; these will soon locate themselves in bays and rocky places and on banks over which char nets are not drawn; cease netting for trout, and we shall soon find a large extent of well stocked angling ground, affording good sport to visitors in April, May, and June.

If a programme similar to the one at Loch Leven cannot at once be organised, why should not the alternative scheme which I have suggested be tried? I feel sure it is a feasible one, at all events it is worth attempting.

THE SALMONIDÆ OF WESTMORLAND.

XI.

Capability of our various Lakes for producing Fish.

THE water in the Lake of Windermere is highly favourable to the production of trout, and they grow to a large size, and are exceedingly rich and well flavoured. In our Westmorland lakes, and the remark I am going to make is applicable to those in Cumberland, as well as to some in Scotland, wherever there are pike, the trout are finer, with richer flesh. Compare those caught in Windermere and Grasmere with those from Ullswater and Haweswater—or in order to verify our comparisons, let us cross our boundaries and place trout from Wast Water side by side with those from Buttermere or Thirlmere. Whilst the trout in Windermere, Grasmere, Buttermere, and Thirlmere, frequently reach from one pound up to three pounds in weight, and occasionally heavier, those in Ullswater, Haweswater, and Wast Water, rarely exceed one and a half pound, in fact the angler surveys with pride as it lies in his basket every trout over one pound in weight, caught in any of the last three lakes. The flesh of those taken out of Ullswater and Haweswater, though generally white, is sweet and good, but not so rich in flavour as that of trout caught in Windermere and Grasmere, which is mostly pink in colour.

Those lakes containing pike have a large space of alluvial matter in their beds, very productive of aquatic insects which breed amongst the water plants growing luxuriantly therein, and this is the chief reason why such well-fed trout are found along with pike; at the same time I am quite

aware that this "fresh-water shark" keeps down the number of small and weak trout, so leaving more food for the stronger and better thriving ones. Windermere possesses many advantages which if properly utilised would make it a valuable resort for anglers. With a reasonable outlay access to and from the sea by the Leven could be rendered more easy to the multitudes of salmon trout which fatten in Morecambe Bay, and would reach the lake on their autumnal journey in August and September. As many of these fish would pass through Rydal and Grasmere in order to spawn in the Brathay, Rothay, Easedale Beck, and their tributaries, the number of pike in those lakes and in Skelwith Pools up the Brathay, ought to be diminished, or they will interrupt not only the young trout bred in the upper waters on their way to Windermere where their parents are domiciled, but will commit great ravages on the migratory salmonidæ in their descent to the sea. If the attempt to increase the growth of the latter species in the tributaries to Windermere is to be successful, pains must be taken to keep down the pike in that lake, also, because the smoults, unlike the young trout which on arriving in their parent water, locate themselves wherever they find suitable ground, have to swim down the lake until they reach the Leven and though instinct may teach them to avoid "pike ground" the instinct in the latter fish will soon lead them to watch for the descending shoals of smoults. If we desire to utilise Windermere for trout as well as char, the persistent netting of the first named fish must cease.

None of our Westmorland lakes afforded better and more regular sport to the angler than Ullswater did forty years ago. A portion of it, particularly the east side, at the Pooley Bridge end, was regularly netted during the season, and supplied many a well filled basket for the Manchester market. But a large extent was never molested in that way except for private use. As I have previously said, the

average size of the trout was not great, but they were lively, bright looking fish, and rising freely at the artificial fly or eagerly seizing the minnow when used in trolling. If the day was at all favourable during April, May, and June, the angler was certain of catching a good basket with either the fly or minnow. The fish varied a little in weight and appearance according to the feeding ground from which they were taken. The pleasure was enhanced by the glorious scenery, composed of sylvan beauty reposing under August majesty.

Many opinions have been given as to the decline of fish in Ullswater, and in the early part of this subject I expressed mine. Therefore I will not trouble your readers again with it, but content myself with venturing a hope that the residents on the banks of that beautiful lake will unite together in organising means which may prove successful in once more replenishing Ullswater with an abundant store of trout.

In bringing this subject to a close, I may tell my readers that it has afforded me pleasure to take them along the banks of the Kent, to make them acquainted with a portion of the Lune and some of the worthies who fished therein, reminding me also of favourite localities, some lovely in themselves and all places of renown in the old angler's memory. Ellerbeck Foot, Herbuck, Black Dub Bower Wheel, Castle How Pot, Th' Wharl, Cobble Dub, Davy Bank Wheel, Kill Dub, Corney Wood Nook, Fleetholme, Salmon Haalds, Dillicar Wood, Eel Beck Foot, Hinging Banks, Carlingill Beck Foot, Cookset, Stepping Stones, High Carlingill, Froth Pot, &c. Whilst penning the details appertaining to the salmonidæ of Westmorland, I have been refreshed by the many beautiful pictures of Windermere and Ullswater brought under review on which I was tempted to linger, but hesitated, knowing that reality excels any description.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

I.

Fishing in Boyhood — My first Trout — Joe Winn — First Visit to the Lune — Borrow Bridge and Mrs. Noble — W. G. Best — Penrith — Thomas Wilkinson — Elizabeth Ritson — Pooley Bridge.

In April, 1821, I went for a month to Broad Gate, the family residence of the late Daniel Weaver. The house lies on what was the old Ambleside road, about one mile from Ings. This road went across a portion of Applethwaite Common, then past St. Catherine's and down a steep descent to Troutbeck Bridge. Near Broad Gate was a bobbin mill turned by the river Gawen, and here one balmy day, during his dinner hour, one of the workmen sallied forth with his rod; not jointed, stained, and varnished; no, it was a self-grown rowan tree or mountain ash; no reel; the line attached to the end, and with this he commenced to fish. I remember it as clearly as if it was yesterday, and the pleasure I experienced as first one and then another bonnie trout was hauled forth out of the stream, until, when his time was up, he had caught a very nice dish.

There were fewer anglers in those days. Why could not I fish for trout? So I returned to Broad Gate and Mr. Weaver dressed me a fly on a real hook; it was not a crooked pin, and then, with a line made of noggywife thread and a small hazel stick, I walked off, prouder of my tackle than in after years I felt with the best London made fly-rod, to fish in a small stream which ran by the roadside. After patiently casting my fly for ten minutes my efforts were rewarded by a sharp twitch at the hook, which caused the

rod to bend. I held on expecting to see a silvery trout struggling for its liberty, but it was either too large for my unpracticed hands, or else it got into the swift run of the swollen stream and then under a wall, where I lost both it and my fly. On my return they laughed and told me I had got hold of a stick, to which I replied it must have been a fish for I felt it moving. Last year I was passing the place and stopped to inspect the spot where I made my first essay at fly-fishing.

I pass over occasional minnow fishing. and catching craw fish (crebbiges) in the stream which supplied the pond at Parkside (where they used to abound) and commence with the spring of 1828, when, having made for myself a rod of red pine and logwood, I set off about five o'clock one May morning and walked to Scarfoot Mill, where I began operations and presently captured a trout about four ounces in weight. I was charmed and ran to shew it to the foreman, old Joseph Currie, who was walking about in his list shoes. After surveying me and then the fish, he declared it must have been "blind on't tae ee." "Blind on't tae ee or not," was of no consequence to me. Away I went home with my prize, reaching there at half-past seven, just in time for breakfast. The next attempt was going with my schoolfellow, Robert P. Barrow, up the Mint, but neither of us were successful. In 1829 I went to Liverpool and occasionally angled for dace, but the desire to be a fly-fisher never left me. I remember during one of my holidays at home that it had been a wet night, and the river looked like worm fishing, so I persuaded my youngest brother to go with me to Scarfoot. As we were passing through the old windmill yard I suddenly remembered that I had dreamed the night before that I went fishing and caught first a small trout and then a large eel, which dream I related to my brother. When we got to the mill the fish would not bite, and we were told that Bob Martindale had been on "wi t' cowl net." After

persevering a long time I got a small trout and soon after an eel, nearly as long as my arm, and so heavy I thought I should never have got it out. Then the dream came afresh before my mind, and I called to my brother to come and see the eel about which I dreamed. The fish were taken home and cooked, but nothing could persuade me to eat of them.

A few days after this occurrence I was trying my hand in the Mint at the foot of the Scarfoot Mill race, when my attention was drawn to a remarkable looking man fishing up the middle of the river. His coat was a lapelled one, with long, broad laps, out of each pocket protruded long grass, and the tails of trout, amongst them one or two large ones, which he had caught on his way up. He wore knee breeches, blue grey stockings and clogs, and his rod looked as though it had never seen varnish or paint and had been in use half a century. He was fishing with the caddis bait. I had some conversation with him, and found that he was the veteran fly-fisher, Joe Winn. I asked him to make me a good hair cast, which in the course of a day or two he brought, and more likely flies I have never seen, but having to return to Liverpool I did not test their merits. Joe Winn was an adept up the Mint in catching fish, all the "smittal" places were well-known to him, and it was said if he thought a brother angler was following him he stoned the special pools after having fished them.

Being once more resident in Kendal I walked with the late Roger Watters to Borrow Bridge, and made my first acquaintance with the Lune, on whose banks I have spent so many happy days. Mrs. Noble gave us a capital breakfast, and we set to work. It was a bright August morning in 1835, but ominous clouds appeared, accompanied with an occasional distant rumble. Mr. Watters waded down the middle of the river which was low. I fished from the side. On reaching Dillicar Park Wood we retraced our steps, and

after refreshing ourselves with tea set off home. Mr. Watters got a dozen pinks and I had three trout, one over half a pound. Our host, John Noble, told us it was no use fishing when there was so little water—we ought to come when the river was bank full—a hint that I did not forget.

The spring of 1836 was a very dry one; during the whole of May almost no rain had fallen, when at the close of the first week in June it rained continuously for three days, and the dry bed of the river Lune was once more covered by a majestic stream. I arranged with my friend, the late Thomas Rigge, who was then in the office of R. and R. Moser, to drive him to Borrow Bridge in our pony chaise. I was to call for him in Stramongate at six o'clock in the morning, which I did, but Thomas, though a keen fisher, was apt to consume the midnight oil in reading and storing his mind, so when morning arrived he was overpowered with sleep, and on this day it required a considerable amount of ringing and knocking ere my friend appeared. About 6.30 we were off. Oh, it was a grand morning; all nature seemed to rejoice; the fields, hitherto almost brown with drought, were clothed with an emerald hue; the air was delicious with the perfume of primroses and wild hyacinths, and our spirits were elated with the prospect of good sport. Our host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Noble, encouraged us with hope, and provided as usual a plentiful breakfast. Mrs. Noble's ham and eggs were always excellent. The Lune was bank full and a splendid colour. Every throw brought a rise, and had we been experienced anglers we should have filled our panniers. At Carlingill we saw our friend, the late W. G. Best, who had fished up the "fair mile" to meet us. How he did pull them out! We all met at Borrow Bridge. W. Best had ten pounds of grand trout. I had four pound. I forget the number in Mr. Rigge's pannier, but we were pleased with the excursion. On that day William Best and I fished for the first time in company, and though I have

spoken of him in my papers on the Salmonidæ of Westmorland and may have to allude to him ere I conclude the present series, I feel constrained to bear my testimony to the memory of one with whom "I paddled in the burn" for twenty-five years, and on whom I always looked as being a man free from guile. During that period and to the end of his life our friendship was never clouded. As we drove home Mr. Rigge told me that his brother Isaac and William Petty had been spending a week at Ullswater, generally trolling, and that they had had fair sport. Would I like to go? So we set off the following Saturday night outside the mail to Penrith, where we spent the Sunday.

Attending the Friends' meeting in the morning, I was, on looking around, reminded of one who had just passed to a better world — Thomas Wilkinson, of Yanwath, who died June 13th, 1836, and was buried at Tirrel, born April 29th, 1751. This venerable looking Friend always wore light drab clothes, knee-breeches, and shoes fastened with silver buckles. His hair, silvery white, fell down almost to his shoulders. His countenance was benign and animated. His figure was tall and erect. He resided with his sister Barbara in a house on the banks of the Eamont, not far from Yanwath Hall, where he occupied himself in agricultural and literary pursuits. His "Tour to the British Mountains" is interesting and amusing. He tells his readers that probably they will smile when he informs them how on commencing the journey on horseback he was obliged to hold his pocket handkerchief in his hand, as on looking back he saw his native mountains gradually recede from view. His poem on the Eamont contains some beautiful passages. He was much attached to the Lowther family.

We also visited that interesting old Friend, Hannah Walker, whose sister, Elizabeth Ritson, remembered seeing the bodies of twelve troopers, killed in the battle with the Rebels in 1745 on Clifton Moor, laid on straw in her father's

stable. Previously, Elizabeth Ritson gave me a cannon ball found after the fight, which I have still in my possession.

We stayed at Pooley Bridge, and took up our quarters at the Sun Inn, kept by Mr. Richardson. Here we were introduced to two important personages — Hebson, the shoemaker, fly dresser, and fishing tackle maker, and at times dealer in Ullswater trout. He was the general oracle regarding flies. I am happy to say his son, though possessed of one arm only, when last I heard of him filled the position of general tackle maker and fly dresser, combined with that of postman, in which office he was much respected. After fitting ourselves up in Hebson's shop we then were called upon to arrange with the second of those personages.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

II.

Tom Watt — Fishing on Ullswater — Catching Chub — Thomas Rigge — Tirril — John Slee — Rothay Bank — Fishing on Windermere — Heavy Snowstorm — The late Mr. Crosfield — The late Mr. Head and his Father — Alteration of Course of the Rothay by Mr. Brancker.

About five feet nine inches in height, powerfully built, with a head somewhat round and thickly covered with black curly hair, just beginning to show a tinge of grey — his face bright crimson, with black bushy whiskers and white teeth, without hat, cap, or coat — is the description of Tom Watt as he stood before us on Monday morning to receive our orders. Being told we were for trolling, he said he would get us some "mennums" directly. When our lunch and everything else was ready we set off for the boat, Tom Watt without either hat or coat, leading the way. On enquiry I found that Tom never wore a hat, and I never saw him with a coat; in fact, he reminded me of Sir Walter Scott's description of William of Deloraine, who heeded neither heat nor cold, a summer's drought, nor a winter's flood. If a lot of trout were required, Tom would carry the net through the river, and when that was done would, in his wet clothes, jump into a boat and row you anywhere on the lake. He was invulnerable except to one enemy, and that enemy was John Barleycorn. He was a capital boatman, but we could not keep him right, and at the end of the fourth day we dismissed him and engaged another.

We had fair sport, catching from 10lbs. to 14lbs. each day, principally trout, with a few good-sized perch. The largest trout did not exceed 1lb.; the largest perch weighed 1½lbs., a very fine fish. We usually fished up to Lyulph's Tower, and calling at Howtown on our return reached Pooley Bridge about seven in the evening. We found the simplest and best form of trolling tackle on that lake to consist of three double No. 4 sneckbend hooks, tied on about three quarters of an inch apart to an ordinary minnow trace with two swivels. We used sneckbends; perhaps for trolling purposes round bends may be stronger. It was just the height of the season for the green and grey drake and bracken clock, and now and then we tried a cast successfully, but my friend Mr. Rigge preferred trolling. Mr. Bray, from Preston, was paying his annual visit to Patterdale. He was a persevering and successful fly-fisher, getting, we understood, from 8lbs. to 10lbs. daily.

A gentleman from Penrith, of the name of Kirkbride I think, caught a trout with the fly in the middle of the lake opposite Ravenscragg, on one of the days we were there, which weighed 8lbs. We did not see the fish as we were at the upper end when it was caught. I conclude it was a *salmo ferox*, as that species were then frequently seen in the breeding streams during November, and the common trout in Ullswâter do not attain similar proportions to those in Windermere. We caught one char, about three quarters of a pound, whilst trolling past Sandwyke.

One afternoon we tried a deep hole in the Eamont for chub, using cheese curd as a bait, and caught two or three in a very short time.

At that period the lower eastern shore of the lake was systematically fished with the net and the proceeds sent to Manchester for sale. The Glenridding mines were in active operation, and yet angling was good, and continued to be so until the weir across the Eamont for supplying Penrith

with water was erected when it rapidly declined. I was glad to hear, not long ago, that an improvement had commenced, which I hope will continue, as it has excellent capabilities for being a first-rate trout producing lake.

Sitting in a boat from nine to seven, with an interval of about an hour, had a curious effect on the brain. We were always ready for our evening meal, and shortly after I was glad to get to bed, but Mr. Rigge was not content to feed his body only, he could not think of retiring without giving his mind an intellectual feast. So he ensconced himself in an arm chair, pulled out his snuff-box and with candles and a book made himself happy. When bidding him good night the first evening, I said "Breakfast at 7 30." No, he thought, "eight might do." "Very well, at eight punctually, good night," and soon I was asleep, but dreaming that I was in the boat, which went lip-lop-lip-lop, and then a bouncing wave lifted up the bow and down I went again to go through the same experience. This continued till far into the morning, but after two or three nights the sensation wore off.

At eight o'clock a beautiful breakfast was spread; large perch split open, dressed with butter, salt, and pepper, and broiled, with ham and eggs and coffee, but where was Thomas. Had he been called—"Yes sir at 7 30." So up I went and found him just turning round for another snooze. By dint of perseverance I at last got him to remember were he was and what he had come for, and then he arose, and shortly after we were doing justice to our ample spread.

On Sunday we walked to Tirril, a small village half way between Pooley Bridge and Penrith, to attend the meeting of "Friends" in that place. Amongst those present was the celebrated mathematician, John Slee, who with his son Thomas used to teach students from the University of Cambridge, anxious to perfect themselves in that science—John Slee was a striking looking man, and like many other philosophers occasionally much abstracted. His remarks

were pithy and his replies amusing. Walking on the road one day he was accosted by a man who said — "I beg your pardon sir. This is not the road to Penrith, is it?" Mr. Slee stopped and turning round looked earnestly at the stranger, and thus addressed him. "Friend, thou first of all tells me a lie and then asks me if it is true." "It is the way to Penrith."

We enjoyed our stay at Pooley Bridge, Mrs. Richardson was a capital provider. As I shall have to mention this lake with special reference to the Ullswater end, I will for the present take my leave of it.

Since writing my previous paper, I have been informed that Hebson who was postman and fly dresser at Pooley Bridge, during my visits from 1872 to 1877, has left, and is engaged in another occupation.

On the twelfth day of our location there we started for home, fishing up to Patterdale where we dined; from thence proceeding on foot. Half way up the Kirkstone Pass we sat down by the road side and enjoyed half an hour's delicious and refreshing sleep. The hotel at Patterdale was kept by Mr. Donaldson, I think, who had seldom more than two pair of post horses with ponies for his summer work. We shall, as I proceed, witness the change in the traffic brought about by the introduction of the railway system and the energy of the succeeding landlord. I now take leave of my friend and schoolfellow, Thomas Rigge, as an angler, and bring him before my readers as an accomplished and astute lawyer, who by his energy and ability gained for himself a partnership in the house of a noted firm in Liverpool, where he was greatly valued. In the midst of his labours when in the prime of life he was seized by an attack of illness which ere long proved fatal, much to the sorrow of all who knew him.

In May, 1839, my kind friend, the late John Crosfield, of Rothay Bank, invited me to spend a few days at his house.

The weather was beautiful, and the first morning he said if I liked to go in his boat he would be glad to row, which acceptable offer was immediately fallen in with and away we went, and as soon as the boat was fairly out of the shallow water at the mouth of the river, I ran out for the first time on Windermere two trolling lines with minnows. Presently a good tug, and very soon a lovely Windermere trout about 14oz. was in the boat. This was encouraging, and it was not long before the line was again fishing. Just as we were passing a most tempting spot for a trout Mr. Crosfield, resting on his oars, called my attention to a beautiful view and proceeded to expatiate thereon. Now no one admires scenery more than I do, but I was compelled to call his attention at that time to my lines, and say whilst we were surveying the beauties of nature my lines were getting foul of the stones, &c., at the bottom. So I reeled them up shortly after, and entered into the enjoyment which the views at the head of our noble Windermere always give, feeling decided that when you intend to fish your mind for the time being must be given to that object.

In the afternoon I engaged Mr. William Sproat, a shoemaker, and a first-rate angler, to take me in his boat. We went towards Ecclerigg, and had some sport with the fly. At that time a person from Troutbeck, I think, was in the habit of cutting names and quotations from books on the large cobbles standing out of the water in the Troutbeck river and in Ecclerigg Bay. His name was Longmire, and they were obvious to any one on that portion of the lake or crossing Troutbeck Bridge.

About four o'clock a heavy snowstorm commenced, which lasted three hours. When the atmosphere became clear the scenery was grand, and the contrast between the green and the white was very marked—beautiful green up to the snow line, beyond which all was pure white, upon which the stars, as evening advanced, shone brilliantly.

This was on the 9th of May. At half-past three o'clock the next morning I stood on Rothay Bridge admiring the scene. Not a breath of wind. The snow-capped hills towering majestically in the unfolding beams of early morn over the peaceful valleys of Rydal, Scandale, and Ambleside.

Four o'clock was the hour Mr. Sproat and I had agreed to meet at Waterhead, and we were punctual. There was no snow in the fields around us, but the hills were covered with dazzling whiteness. We sought for the boat's cable; alas! it was frozen hard, and we had some difficulty in pulling the boat in on account of the ice. However, we finally got off, and trolled for char, but the lake was glassy with a slight haze, and at eight we disembarked without a fish. We had more snow that afternoon, succeeded by frost which made sad havoc in the gardens.

At the time of which I am speaking, 1839, the use of the lath or otter for char was only in its infancy. Trolling with from forty to sixty yards of line and having a trace of gut, four yards in length, was the general plan, two rods to each boat.

The late Mr. Crosfield, of Rothay Bank, was, along with his oldest brother, instrumental in establishing the extensive concern in Liverpool carried on in the name of George Crosfield and Co. He married the daughter of Joseph Monkhouse Head, of Carlisle, who, after spending his early life at Raughton Head, in the neighbourhood of Hesketh Newmarket, and marrying a widow, settled in that city, and with the aid of his remarkably efficient and intelligent wife succeeded in making a large and profitable grocery business, to which eventually was added that of banking. His only son, the late George Head Head, who took an active part in the concern, was accustomed to visit Lancaster when the fairs were held in order to buy cheeses, as he and his father were considerable dealers in that article. Their shop was on the site now occupied by the Cumberland Union Bank.

Mr. Joseph Monkhouse Head was a large and powerfully built man, with a fair complexion and light hair, which becoming, as age crept on, silvery white, clothed him with a venerable aspect. After middle life he used to spend a deal of his time in a little room at the back of his shop, where he sat in an arm chair wearing a green serge apron and smoking a long clay pipe. According to Diedrick Knickerbocker, the Dutch historian, of the settlement of New York by the Dutch, who rescued many of the transactions of that wonderful and painstaking people from oblivion, the natives of Holland were much given to the use of tobacco, and most of their extensive schemes were ripened amidst clouds of smoke. How far such a practice enlightened the understanding we will not discuss, but simply adhere to facts. Mr. Head lived to see himself and his son the proprietors of a large and profitable concern, as well as rich bankers in the city of Carlisle.

Mr. Crosfield, about 1837, always having had a strong love for the mountain scenery of the lake district, retired to Rothay Bank, near Ambleside, where he occupied himself in gardening pursuits and forwarding everything which he thought would conduce to the moral and religious improvement of his fellow creatures. He was also interested in some mines in Little Langdale. He was on intimate terms with the late James Brancker, of Liverpool, a partner in a celebrated sugar refining house, who, having bought some land adjoining Clappersgate in 1834, proceeded to build the mansion now called Croft Lodge, upon which, and the boat-houses, was spent a large sum of money.

Mr. Brancker also took an active part in altering the course of the Rothay. As this stream before reaching Rothay Bridge wound in graceful turns around the rocky knolls in the holme it occasionally after heavy rain flooded the low lying land ; so a cut was made alongside the road under Loughrigg, into which the river was turned.

The alteration may have answered as a commercial speculation, but the beauty of the river scenery was much impaired and the fishing damaged. Whenever the course of a trout stream is straightened the variety of current and pool so needful for the comfort and well being of the fish is destroyed, and the number of trout greatly diminishes. The river becomes one continuous run without any of those nice easy pools shaded with trees, under which the fish like to feed without the exertion of constantly stemming a rapid. Besides when the river is in flood the fish can find no easy water in which they can lie until the rush has subsided. Having taken leave of my kind friends at Rothay Bank, where hospitality reigned, I returned home. In my next paper, after a cursory notice of the Lune, I will pass on to Wales, returning to the head of Ullswater and Derwentwater.

ANGLING REMINISCENES.

III.

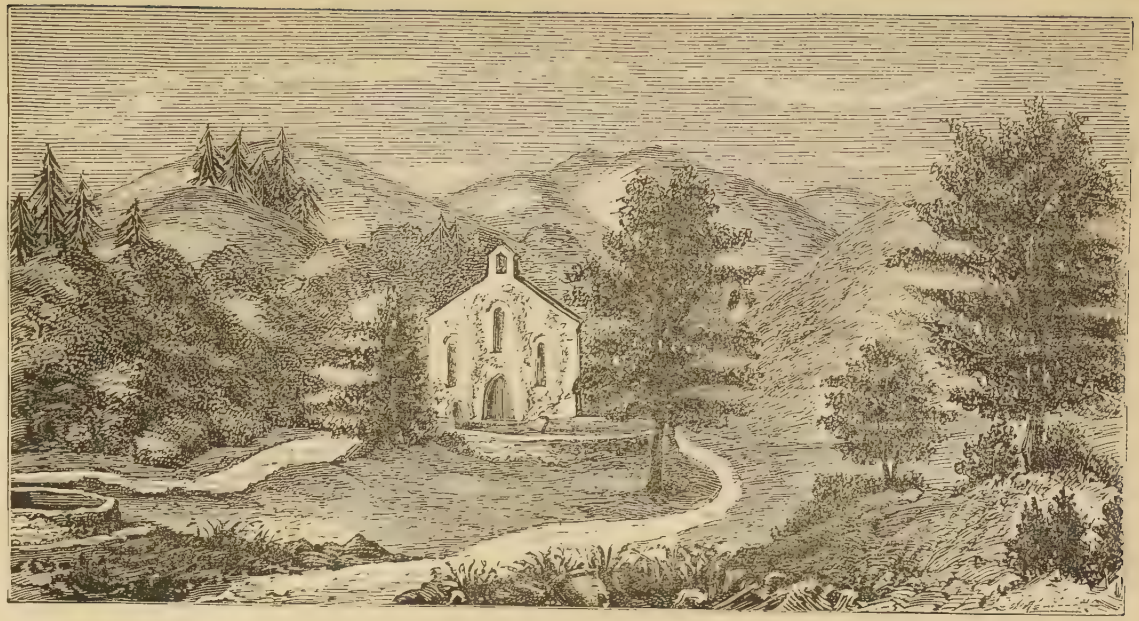
Howgill — Esther Best's Potted Trout — Walk alongside of Chapel Beck — Howgill Chapel — The Old Schoolhouse and Scholars — Amusing Incident — The late Rev. R. C. Hadwin — The Master — Fishing in the Lune — Falling into the River — Excursion into Wales — Ascents up Snowdon, &c.

HAVING arranged to spend two nights in Howgill at the beginning of June, 1840, with my friend William Best, I sent my clothes and tackle over by his cart, and leaving Kendal about six o'clock in the evening, proceeded on foot by a shorter road than the ordinary one. Ultimately I found myself comfortably housed at Howgill Mill. I was shewn into a nice cosy bedroom in a part of the house abutting on the gorge down which Chapel Beck rushes. I was soon lulled to sleep by the sound of the water. This was my first night in Howgill, and proved the precursor of many happy days spent there. Having met with some new minnow tackle in Worcester, I felt anxious to take the opportunity of trying it ere the June sun became hot, so I turned out at three o'clock, and after getting all things ready commenced fishing. The water was beautifully clear. I returned before six with five good-sized trout. Breakfast was soon ready — ham, eggs, and potted trout. Oh, such trout! I do not think I ever eat better. Esther Best knew how to do them, and then the butter being their own making was always sweet and nice. During breakfast Richard Herd turned in and enquired what we were going to do. At half-past seven we set out. How I enjoyed the walk down the side of Chapel Beck to the Lune. The trees, arrayed in

their spring foliage ; thrushes, blackbirds, and larks in full song, the clear sparkling beck chiming in with the music of the songsters. Here and there a primrose and patches of oak fern in all its delicate loveliness, clothed the scene with such a halo of delight as left an impression which, instead of being transient, returned whenever I passed that spot.

Howgill Chapel lies between Howgill Mill and the bridge across Chapel Beck, over which the road from Sedbergh to Shap, by way of Borough Bridge, goes. It is a fine drive on a favourable day. For more than a mile the traveller passes along the steep slope of the Howgill Fells with neither wall nor fence, and over the rustic bridge at Carlingill (usually pronounced Carnigill), not far from which is a cairn which I understand may some day be examined by the Archæological Society. Carlingill Beck forms near its head that grand and imposing gorge called Black Force, which is well worthy of inspection.

But to return to Howgill Chapel. This was rebuilt about 1836, and being now 1883, partly covered with ivy, is a very pretty object. Just outside the churchyard was the cockpit, where at certain times the inhabitants amused themselves with the sport of cock-fighting. Chapel Beck has washed away about half of the ring ; the rest of it is well marked. On the opposite bank of the stream stood the school-house, which I visited. In this place the sons of the farmers and yeomen received their education. The late Michael Branthwaite and his brother used to ride on ponies from High Carlingill, a distance of four miles, every day to this school. The late John Jackson, of Warrington, an eminent mathematician, was also educated here. As I am desirous of being accurate in my delineations of places, I asked my old friend Edmund Herd, of Gate House, to send me the dimensions of their old school-house as it stood in 1840, and he has kindly favoured me with the following description : — "I think it would



HOWGILL CHAPEL.

From a sketch in 1847, by P. M. James, Esq.

be about 12 feet by 18 feet; height about seven feet, and open to the rafters, with an old oak beam across the middle. I and another boy once gave threepence to E. Robinson, of Howgill, who was then at the school, if he would sit astride of the beam until the master came in after dinner, which he gladly accepted, but the master soon caught sight of him, got up his cane, and said, "What, thou's there, is ta," and gave him a few strokes across his back before he could get from his perch. The school was flagged but badly lighted; one small window at the back and two in front. It was hidden amongst trees. We had a stove to warm the room, with a square iron drawer underneath, which was a great convenience — most of us cooked our dinners there and roasted potatoes. We could do a very large quantity in the drawer, and on the top. The master often did the same, but took his home hot in his pocket. The stove had other conveniences besides roasting potatoes. I have seen it scores of times used as a frying-pan — rashers of bacon in the middle, and slices of bread round the sides to keep the dripping from wasting. You would know the master well, the Rev. R. Clifton Hadwin, the only one I ever had. I went to school in the day, and with him salmon fishing at night. He often called me from the other scholars to say that there were two or three salmon in Ulswheel or in other dubs, and asked me to go in the evening, and I never disobeyed him. We killed many salmon, but not later than October. At that time we thought every one was at liberty to kill them if he could. Mr. Hadwin was also a capital fly-fisher. On several occasions he preached in Howgill Chapel." As Mr. Herd remarks, I knew Mr. Hadwin well. He was a man of considerable ability and mental attainment. He was much interested in the natural history of the salmon, which was then exciting considerable attention. He tried some experiments in the hatching of the ova on a small scale. He used the maggot, or gentle, successfully as

a bait for trout. The school was an endowed one, and though eccentric masters may have presided over the boys at times, it was a very useful establishment in Howgill. Times are changed, and an excellent school-house now stands on a plateau further up the road towards Borough Bridge, but near the old site, and it is to be hoped that those who enjoy such superior advantages will excel their forefathers in mental attainments.

My friend and I fished up to Fleetholme, getting back about four o'clock. The scenery on the banks of the Lune is extremely beautiful, and now and then you come to a turn in the river where your admiration is called forth. One of these spots is called Herbuck, just above Ellergill Beck. What the name is derived from I never could tell, but on that day in June Herbuck charmed me. Having occasion to spend a week in Howgill from the 9th to the 15th of the following month (July), I had some excellent fishing. The weather was unsettled, with heavy rain, and the river was full without being muddy, and being at leisure in an afternoon I took that opportunity of trying my hand. I remember one afternoon it was dark with drizzling rain, and the fish rose well. I got eight at one place without moving my position. On retracing my steps I hooked one three quarters of a pound, and being anxious to secure the prize I followed it down the stream under the boughs of some trees ; this position obliged me to look up lest the top of my rod should get fast, and presently I stumbled over a stone and down I came in about twelve inches depth of water. I expected my rod to be broken, and the lid of my pannier to have flown open, all the contents to be floating about me or swimming away, but my augury was disappointed, and all was safe even to the fish on the line which I secured, and then made my way up to Gate House, where I was kindly received by Mr. and Mrs. Herd, the contents of my pannier much admired, and after a hearty invitation to breakfast

with them the following morning, which I accepted, I was advised to make the best of my way to Howgill Mill, and get rid of my dripping clothes.

In August, 1841, I spent two days at Tal-y-Llynn, a small lake at the foot of Cader Idris. On the first afternoon I took stock of the place, endeavouring to ascertain the size of the trout and the sort of flies. About the latter, I only discovered that the residents used large winged flies, of which having none in my fishing book, I proceeded to dress some of our ordinary hackles in use in Westmorland, with a little hare lug on the bodies. At half-past nine the following morning I set off, rowed by a boy who could not speak a word of English. Soon after twelve I returned with nine pounds of beautiful trout, off which a large party, who had just arrived from Towyn in two carriages, along with myself dined. We all went afterwards to a small lake, in English, Clearwater, half way up, and overhung by the awful cliffs of Cader Idris. The following afternoon I called for my bill, which with all etceteras, including boat, amounted to 12*s.* 6*d.*, and as I placed it in the landlord's hand he said "God bless you."

Having sent my luggage on by a coach I walked to Maentwrog and took a car to Beddgelert, which I reached about midnight. On Tuesday morning I joined a party on foot up Snowdon. On arriving at the narrow ridge, not far from the top, in some parts only five feet wide and deeply precipitous on each side, one of our party, a fine strong Cambridge student, after venturing for a few yards on the ridge, suddenly dropped on his hands and knees, in which position he crawled back until he lost sight of the, to him, awful chasms. We did not meet again till evening, when he told us how overpowering his sensations were, and how thankful he was to get away from the spot.

During dinner we arranged a party to go up and see the sun rise. We left the inn at half-past twelve, and taking it

easily we reached the top in good time. The night was cloudy, with bright gleams of moonlight. As we passed across the eventful ridge we thought of our morning companion and fancied him dreaming about his day's exploit, and perhaps concluding it with a fall down the chasm, at the bottom of which he would awake and find himself alive, unhurt, and in a comfortable bed. On arriving at the top we found we were not the only ones bent on witnessing the rising of the glorious orb of day. There were gentlemen in thin summer coats, ladies in gauze shawls, and a little girl about nine years old lightly clad. But just before the expected moment a cold black mist rushed up the mountain side, enveloping us in its chilling embrace. How the ladies shivered! I was so sorry for the little girl that I lent her my plaid. Suddenly the cloud opened as if abruptly cleft in two, and through the fissure for three minutes the sun rose upon our view in all his splendour. We gazed lost in admiration. Then the opening as suddenly closed, like the dropping of a curtain, and clouds and mists, with heavy drops of rain, came driving along, before which we all retreated towards the little hut which afforded shelter for the ladies. It was a grand sight. After breakfast I and another gentleman took a car to Bettws-y-Coed, where I joined the coach for Llangollen. I went out in the afternoon and caught a few trout in the Dee. I ought to have mentioned that whilst staying at Aberystwith, on my way to Tal-y-Llyn, I tried the minnow in the river for a sewin, but was unsuccessful in catching one of that species, about which so much has been written; some writers declaring it to be a variety of *salmo salar*, others affirming it to be *salmo trutta*. Should I ever have the satisfaction of seeing one I shall be in a position to offer an opinion on the subject.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

IV.

A Week with Friends in the Lake District — Charles Gough's Dog — Ullswater — Keswick — William Bow the Veteran Angler — A Night on Derwentwater — John Backhouse, an Expert Guide — Robert Wilson, of Orton — Geo. Whitehead — Remarkable effect of the Song of a Thrush.

In June, 1843, one of my brothers accompanied me to Ambleside in order to join a party of young friends for a week through the Lake District. I took fishing tackle with me, but soon found that a party moving about from place to place must, if they desire any enjoyment, be united during the day in their pursuits, otherwise the time of the majority becomes sacrificed to the pleasure of the minority. Acting on this, and being still desirous of having some fishing, I went with Mr. William Sproat in his boat on Windermere, at nine in the evening, and trolled till 5 30 a.m. We had not much sport—a couple each of pike and trout. At nine we all started for Patterdale, I driving my brother. On reaching the hotel all was activity. A verandah had been erected in front of the old inn, and a large addition to the west end was about finished, the garden nicely laid out, and the stable yard alive with horses, grooms, and post boys. Mr. Gelderd had shewn his good sense in anticipating the wants of the public, developed by increased railway accommodation. The internal arrangements were excellent, Mrs. Gelderd being a capital manager. No smoking was allowed in any of the sitting rooms. If Mr. Gelderd chanced to see a gentleman walking along a corridor with a lighted cigar, he requested him at once to put it out; so the hotel was

devoid of what to some is a great annoyance — the smell of tobacco smoke. The following notice of Patterdale, by Mr. William Green, in 1819, may interest some of my readers: — "Such tourists as wish to remain more than one day at Patterdale may discharge their horses on arriving there, and as no post horses are kept at Patterdale they may obtain more when wanted from either Ambleside or Penrith."

After an early dinner we took a boat to Howtown, and during our stroll there were much amused by finding ourselves in a barn turned into a dancing school, the presiding genius of which requested us to witness the performances of his pupils. On our return we met with a boat on its way back to Pooley Bridge, into which I got and commenced fishing. As the evening wore on the fish rose well but did not take good hold, and after getting 4lbs. or 5lbs. we turned the bow of the boat homeward, reaching the inn at 3 30 a.m. It is worthy of notice that anglers can always find a good reason for trying their skill in fishing. If sport has been bad they are anxious on the first chance to redeem their credit, and if it has been good why should they not take the advantage when in their power? So long as the elements are not hopelessly unfavourable their spirits continue elastic. So as we were not to leave Patterdale until 2 30 p.m. I begged to isolate myself for that morning and again try what could be done. At nine I was off trolling. The fish took the minnow fairly well, but would not rise at the fly, so I returned in time to drive to Keswick across that uninteresting moor of Matterdale. We had a beautiful walk in the evening, and having arranged with the late Mr. Wright to be our guide, set off in good time next morning for Calder Bridge *via* Honister Cragg and Scale Hill. Patterdale was to me a delicious spot, and its romantic situation possessed charms of which you never grew weary. It had its "king," the royal office being vested in the Mounsey family. How

enjoyable it was to get into a boat with one of the old guides, and whilst watching the trolling lines to listen to his account of the discovery of the remains of poor Gough, who fell from near the summit of "the mighty Helvellyn," and to hear his description of the "mute favourite" who attended his master's remains. This dog was sent to Mrs. Gough, an aunt of the unfortunate gentleman, residing in Kendal, and was frequently the playfellow of our late worthy townsman, Mr. Thomas Atkinson, when a boy. The remains of Charles Gough were laid in the Friends' burying ground at Tirril.

What a delightful course when your boat glided slowly along past Patterdale Hall, Glenridding, Stybarrow Cragg overhung by trees, and clothed with moss and heather, where the marauding Scots were stopped, defeated, and compelled to retreat by the dalesmen, headed by Mounsey, subsequently made "king" — and so on to Glencoin, where, in a dell, and almost surrounded by trees, stands the isolated and lonely farm-house of Glencoin. Fly fishing along here used to be first rate all the way to Lyluph's Tower. From Place Fell the views are grand and beautiful. What a nice stroll it was to Low Hartsop, and then to Hartsop Hall, but the scene is now somewhat changed, and the grandfathers of the present generation, with their thick blue coats, bright metal buttons, knee breeches, and checked shirts, are gone. Wide chimneys, where hung legs of mutton, flitches of bacon and hams in the smoke of a wood and peat hearth fire, are nearly extinct. Even a wether sheep of four years old, to which age forty years ago they were kept before they were considered prime mutton, is now a scarce article. In fine weather Patterdale, with its immediate surroundings, is a spot replete with interest and enjoyment. I have not yet spoken particularly of Martindale, but have no intention of omitting that most picturesque of our Westmorland valleys. I may say that the grandeur and beauty of Ullswater drew so many visitors to see it that

soon after Mr. Gelderd's decease, about 1860, a commodious hotel, near Glenridding, was built and occupied by Mr. Bownass, who has now for some years conducted both hotels to the satisfaction of the public.

But to return to Calder Bridge, where, after visiting the Abbey, we spent the night. Next morning we proceeded by the Strands to Wastdale Head. Anxious to try Sty Head Tarn I hurried up the pass, and thought success would crown my efforts, for the fish rose beautifully, when all on a sudden a peal of thunder dispersed my pleasing anticipations. The fish gave over rising, and I made the best of my way to Seathwaite, where carriages were in waiting to take us to Lodore Hotel, from whence we took a boat to Keswick. Here I arranged with that veteran angler, William Bowe, usually called Billy Boo, to take me for a night's fishing on the lake. We started at nine, and had some sport with pike and trout. By way of a change, and keeping us awake, he now and then blew a tune on his bugle, which, in the stillness of a summer's night, sounded and echoed gloriously. He also related the now well-known legend that for some weeks prior to the Rebellion of 1715, in which the Earl of Derwentwater was engaged, troops of horse soldiers were seen galloping along the tops of the hills on the east side of Derwentwater, realizing the adage that coming events cast their shadows before them. I believe the statement of such an appearance being visible is true, and may be accounted for by troops being exercised in the valley during a peculiar state of the atmosphere. Thus the night wore away, and at five a.m. I reached the Royal Oak, and in a few minutes was driving my brother to Kendal, which we reached at 10 30. William Bowe's boat was a picture of neatness and order — lath, trolling, and perch lines, trimmers for pike, rods, and nets, all so arranged as not to encumber the boat, and yet when required to be ready to hand. He lived to upwards of

eighty, and used his boat to within a year of his death, which occurred, I think, about 1878. In 1854, or thereabouts, the fishermen on Derwentwater agreed to give up the use of the lath. Some of them thought their sport was over. Our hero, William Bowe, mounted four rods in the stern of his boat, from which he ran lines with three good-sized flies on each, and with this apparatus he got in a nice breeze as many trout as ever he got with the lath.

Being in Patterdale in 1845 I went on the lake with the guide and boatman at Gelderd's Hotel, John Backhouse, and I recall him to some of my readers as being one of the best boatmen, either for a fishing trip or a party of pleasure, I ever knew. He was also a steady and reliable mountain guide. When my trolling lines were out he would sometimes say, "Look out! there's a fish playing about or following the minnow," and he was generally correct, but I could never make it out how he knew. He was out trolling with a gentleman one day when two trouts seized the same minnow at once and both were caught. When there was difficulty in finding the body of a young man who was drowned opposite Stybarrow, John Backhouse was consulted, who, after ascertaining the probable site of the disaster and the direction of the wind about the time of and since the occurrence, pointed out to the searchers the most likely course for the drags to be run, and very soon the remains were brought on shore. One morning he took a party up Helvellyn. On their return he was engaged to row a gentleman with his luggage to Pooley Bridge, a distance of ten miles. No sooner was he back to Patterdale than his services were required to guide a party over the shoulder of Helvellyn to Keswick, thirteen miles, from which place he, after getting something to eat, at once returned. I am aware that guides have, by way of exhibition, accomplished more arduous feats, but what I have related was in the ordinary course of his occupation. On asking him how

he managed to get through so much, he replied "I begin the day as I mean to end it. If I was to run about and 'tew' myself in a morning I should have sometimes to give up in the afternoon."

In July, 1845, whilst spending a few days in Howgill, we fished up to Borrow Bridge, and whilst enjoying our tea a noted angler — Robert Wilson, of Orton — turned in with a basket of beautiful trout which he had caught between Tebay Bridge and the Borrow. He fished with single hair, did not wade, nor had he used a landing net. Orton has given birth to other famous anglers. The name of the late Thomas Hayton will be carried down to posterity by the nomenclature of his favourite fly. Mr. Hayton used to fish in Sunbiggin Tarn, near which stood the house in which the famous George Whitehead, one of the principal coadjutors of George Fox in founding the Society of Friends, was born. George Whitehead was educated at Blencoe, and after suffering many imprisonments finally settled in London, where he afterwards resided. During the dreadful plague he aided in nursing the sick. He was a noble ancestor of the present Alderman Whitehead, of London. During our walk back to Howgill my friend William Best related the following: — "When I was a young man I lived at Mealbank, and was always fond of fishing. Rain had fallen during the night, and on Sunday morning there was a splendid water and the fish were rising. I could not resist the temptation, so went for my rod, and started at the end of the old mill. I got first one and then another, and thought my pannier would soon be full, when suddenly I heard a thrush singing in a neighbouring tree. I always liked to hear the songs of birds, but there was something queer about this thrush. I listened, and to my astonishment heard it say 'What! fishing? what! fishing? — On a Sunday! on a Sunday! — Go to hell! go to hell!' I 'lapped' up my line, took my rod home, and never attempted to fish on a Sunday again."

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

V.

Earthquake — Visit to St. Mary's Loch — St. Mary's Cottage.

In my last paper I spoke of fishing for trout and pike throughout the night, and before commencing another narrative I am inclined to express the result of my experience as respects the benefit arising from such a practice. When no unusual disturbance of the elements is either present or impending, pike and trout generally are on the feed from about an hour before to two and a half hours after sunset, and for a short time prior to and after sunrise, so that usually three or four hours in the middle of what we may call night are very slow and uncertain as respects the catching of trout, char, or pike. In August, 1845, I had a day's fishing on Ogwen Lake, near Bangor. I used our ordinary hackles dressed on No. 4 hooks, and found them answer well. The trout were a good size.

I have been informed by one of my Howgill friends that Herbeck, of which I spoke in "Reminiscences No. 3," ought to have been spelled "Hurbuck," and being anxious to give the correct nomenclature, I take this opportunity of giving the proper orthography.

I have been also reminded of a singular incident. During the forty-eight years that I fished in the Lune I never caught a trout over one pound in weight with an artificial fly, and I believe the experience of my two friends Richard Herd and William Best, was similar. Yet one day in the month of July, a grandson of the Rev. John Sedgwick, incumbent of Howgill for sixty-four years, being on a visit at Hole

House, borrowed a rod of mine at Howgill Mill to which a strong gut fly cast was attached. He was no angler, but went to the river and commenced lashing a rough foaming stream, just below Chapel Beck foot. In a short time he returned without his rod, but holding in his hands a trout which weighed one and a half pound. He was asked how he got it out, and answered, "I pulled till it came to the side when I drew it on the stones." It took a small dotterel fly.

I propose now to take my leave of this district for the present, and, passing over a few years and the incidents thereof, of which I may probably speak hereafter, turn my thoughts northward, and if my patient readers will follow me, we will give some attention to Scotland. In March, 1871, whilst spending a few nights with my late old and dear friend, William Sutton, he invited me to accompany him and his wife to St. Mary's Loch in Selkirkshire. I was to join them in Carlisle on Monday, the 20th of March, and the needful tackle was prepared. During the evening of the previous Saturday, whilst sitting at tea, we were startled by a strange rumble which soon passed off, but at eleven p.m., just as we were going to bed, a rumble commenced which kept gradually increasing until it seemed as if the road was filled with railway carriages hurrying rapidly towards the house. Just as we might have expected them to be upon us the floors shook with an ominous rattle. One or two of our children, roused from their sleep, rushed into our room overcome with terror. The noise and shaking passed away, but the sense of awe and utter helplessness was overpowering. I never experienced such a sensation. This was the earthquake of March 18, 1871. My friend, Henry Swinglehurst, who lived for some years in South America, assured me that frequent as the shocks of earthquakes are in that part of the world, the inhabitants never lose their impression of awe occasioned by that phenomenon. I will quote from

"Andes and the Amazon," by James Orton, M.A., an American traveller of eminence. Speaking of earthquakes, he says, "No amount of familiarity with earthquakes enables one to laugh during the shock, or even at the subterranean thunders which sound like the clanking of chains in the realm of Pluto. All animated nature is terror-stricken. The horse trembles in his stall, the cow moans a low melancholy tune, the dog sends forth an unearthly yell, sparrows drop from the trees as if dead, crocodiles leave the trembling bed of the river and run with loud cries into the forest, and man himself becomes bewildered and loses all capacity. When the earth rocks beneath our feet something besides giddiness is produced. We feel our utter insignificance in the presence of a mysterious power that shakes the Andes like a reed. But more; there is an awful insecurity. "A moment," says Humboldt, "destroys the illusion of a whole life; our deceptive faith in the repose of nature vanishes, and we feel transported into a region of unknown destructive forces. A judgment day seems impending, and each moment is an age when one stands on a world convulsed."

Monday, the 20th, arrived, and on the station at Carlisle I joined my friends. At Beattock we took a carriage for the remaining seventeen miles. The road was new to me, but well known to Mr. Sutton, who pointed out the various objects of interest, not forgetting certain pools in Moffat Water, which in some of his excursions he had successfully fished. As we proceeded up the valley bounded on the east by the hills at the head of the Ettrick we passed Bodsbeck, celebrated by Hogg; that magnificent fall of water well known as the Gray Mare's Tail, then up the steep ravine of Dobbs Linn at the head, and in the recesses of which the Covenanters used to meet in order to avoid the bullets and sword of the unmerciful Claverhouse. On the top of the pass, at an elevation of about 1,200 feet, stood an old solitary shepherd's hut, now (1883) replaced by a more

substantial dwelling. Here we pulled up, and my friends received a hearty greeting from Janet, a true specimen of an ancient Scotch matron, who along with the shepherd — his wife (Janet's daughter) occupied the hut. On entering, a large peat fire was blazing, opposite which was a bed. From the roof and beam hung balls of woollen yarn, stockings, shepherds' sticks, one or two guns, shoulders and legs of mutton from sheep which had come to an untimely end, locally called "bracksey," besides a variety of articles of clothing, &c. A well-worn Bible was a conspicuous object.

We now descended the watershed of the Tweed, along the side of the Little Yarrow, passing at the head of the Loch of the Lowes, Chapel Hope, a large sheep farm where once stood a chapel, kept up by the monks of Melrose. A level ride of a mile and a half along the side of the Loch brought us to Tibbie Shiels', the hostelry at the head of St. Mary's Loch. Tibbie and her son came out to greet us, and it was an interesting sight to watch how anxious the old lady of nearly ninety was for our comfort. She, along with two female servants, occupied two beds in the kitchen. An occasional shepherd or other caller sat down, and whilst hearing the news drank his bottle of beer or smoked his pipe. My friends took possession of the beds in the coffee or public room, and I was domiciled upstairs. Soon we were seated at a capital meal — mutton chops, eggs, scones, preserves, and tea. In the room where we sat Professor Wilson laid the scene of one or more of his "Noctes," and on the mantelpiece stood a beautiful medallion of that lively writer.

In the early part of the present century two young men of the name of Richardson, residing not far from Middleton Hall, in Westmorland, and connected, I believe, with the Bownass family, left their native county to seek their fortunes in Scotland as molecatchers; one of them got engaged in Ettrick by the then Lord Napier, who soon appreciated the

youth. In a year or two Richardson married a Scotch damsel living not far from Ettrick Kirk, and Lord Napier eventually placed them in a cottage at the head of St. Mary's Loch, to which about eight acres of land (not very productive) were attached. Here Richardson supported his family by repairing the roads and catching moles. Being rather delicate in constitution, his wife commenced providing for travellers, as there was no hostlery nearer than the Gordon Arms, at least six miles off. Richardson in a few years died, leaving his widow, Isabella, who in accordance with Scotch usage retained her maiden name of Shiels, with the charge of five children. She was about thirty-eight at the time of that event. She set to work with spirit, got all her children educated at the nearest school, brought them up, as she had herself been, in the fear of God and in the study of the Bible. Her efforts were blessed. Her cottage became the resort of tourists, who found such care and attention bestowed on their wants that no emblematical sign was required. The house was called after her, and all who travelled in the district knew that so long as there was room they would receive a welcome at Tibbie's. As age crept on she found in her son William an excellent right hand, and though descended on his father's side from a Westmorland family, he proved by his ability, industry, and general knowledge of history and natural objects, a true specimen of a stalwart Scotchman, one of whom both Selkirkshire and Westmorland may be proud. Through the kindness of Lord Napier we were allowed the use of his boat. Next morning, after a hearty breakfast of first-rate porridge, ham and eggs, we set off to fish from the edge, the wind being too strong for sailing. We walked, accompanied by Mrs. Sutton, for more than a mile along the east side of the loch. A strong wind, accompanied by a Scotch mist, blew against our backs, and the loch was covered with white-capped waves. We got a fish or two ere

we reached the particular spot at which we intended to try in earnest. Alas ! on arriving there the wind increased until we could not manage our lines, and so we retraced our steps. It was certainly an unpropitious start — not a shelter of any kind for three-quarters of a mile — but on we trudged over the wet mossy hill-side. At last we reached a plantation, where, under a wall, we found some respite from the storm, and were not long in getting to St. Mary's Cottage, by which name our hostelry was known. The weather improved in the afternoon, and the two anglers succeeded in getting a nice dish of trout, which ran about three to the pound.

The following day brought fine weather, and gave me the opportunity not only of fishing from the boat with Mr. Sutton, but also of examining our surroundings, of which I will endeavour to give some account. The cottage is at the head of St. Mary's Loch, not far from the river running out of the Loch of the Lowes into St. Mary's, which stream is about sixty yards in length, and separates the cottage from the Selkirk road, with which it is connected by a bridge.

I fear, I have exceeded, if not in length, the patience of my readers. However, having got through the preliminaries I hope the succeeding details which I may furnish, will in some measure compensate for what to some may have been uninteresting.

ST. MARY'S LOCH, FROM THE HEAD, NEAR HOGG'S MONUMENT.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

VI.

St. Mary's Loch — Its Surroundings — Fish and Fishing — Tibbie Shiels — Henderlands — St. Mary's Kirk — Raid of James V. on Tushielaw and Henderlands — Dick of Dryhope and Kinmont Willie.

ST. MARY'S Loch is 806 feet above sea, the same elevation as the villages of Shap and Orton in Westmorland, and is surrounded on the east and west with hills rising principally directly out of the Loch from 700 to 1,000 feet. A good level road goes along the west side towards Selkirk, crossing half way down the Loch, which is four miles in length, the gorge of the Meggat valley. A sluice regulating the supply of water to the mills on the Yarrow has been placed at the foot.

To tourists who have been accustomed to the scenery of lakes in a richly wooded district, the surroundings of St. Mary's Loch may appear bare and cold, yet by those who have frequently spent a few days there, it is held in great estimation as one of the most calmly beautiful to be found anywhere, and has been made classic by Scott, whose lines I will now quote :—

Oft in my mind such thoughts awake
By lone St. Mary's silent lake ;
Thou know'st it well — nor fen nor sedge
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge.
Abrupt and sheer the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink,
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land.
Far in the mirror bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view,
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there,
Save where of land yon slender line
Bears thwart the lake the scattered pine ;

Nor thicket dell nor copse you spy
Where living thing concealed might lie;
Nor point retiring hides a dell
Where swain or woodman lone might dwell.
There's nothing left to fancy's guess—
You see that all is loneliness,
And silence aids—though the steep hills
Send to the lake a thousand rills.
In summer tide so soft they weep
The sound but lulls the ear asleep;
Your horse's hoof tread sounds too rude
So stilly is the solitude.

Besides trout, pike, and perch, there are in the Loch a number of bull trout *Salmo Eriox*, which either become naturalised to the fresh water or miss for one season the usual time for migrating to the sea, and occasionally afford good sport to the angler. Two hundred years ago numbers of char or "red wames" ascended the stream at the head of the Loch every autumn to spawn, and were caught by the inhabitants with blankets. These latter fish have disappeared. On the hill side, not far from the bridge leading to the cottage, stands a beautiful monument of the Ettrick Shepherd —James Hogg, who was born in Ettrick, and residing within four or five miles, was a frequent visitor at Tibbie's. On two sides is Hogg's description of himself, as given in the "Queen's Wake," as follows: —

Oft had he viewed as morning rose
The bosom of the lonely Lowes;
Oft thrilled his heart at close of even
To see the dappled vales of heaven
With many a mountain moor and tree
Asleep upon Saint Mary.

Instead of arms or golden crest
His harp with mimic flowers was drest
Around in graceful streamers fell
The brier rose and heather bell.

We had pleasant weather during our four days' stay, three of which we spent on the Loch, accompanied by Robert

Laidlaw, an intelligent resident living with his mother and sister at a newly-erected cottage on the Rodonna estate, over which he exercised supervision. Being a good boatman we were always glad to secure his services when his other duties permitted. Our baskets were not heavy, varying from four to six pounds each per day, but the air was bracing, and on our return to Tibbie's we were ready for the excellent meal provided for us, after which the evening was spent in conversation, reading aloud, and accompanied by a soothing pipe. During our visit in March, 1872, we had snow every day, sometimes to the depth of three or four inches, but this did not prevent the fish rising. On one of the days my friend Mr. Sutton got a bull trout in excellent condition weighing seven pounds. On Saturday I observed a wonderful amount of cleaning going on in the kitchen, where, as I have stated, our hostess Tibbie and the two female servants slept, and in which the household sat and took their meals, and also where callers had such refreshment as they required and smoked their pipes. A large iron pot was placed on the fire evidently betokening preparations for the coming Sabbath. That day was ushered in by a deep snow, otherwise I had intended to accompany my host Mr. Richardson and Robert Laidlaw to the kirk at Ettrick, between five and six miles away across the hills. In the cottage quietness reigned, the large iron pot supplying bowls of most savory broth, which formed the principal part of the dinner for the household, after which as many as could be spared went to the Free Kirk at the foot of a lofty hill called Capper Cleugh, about two miles along the Selkirk road, where also is the schoolhouse and post-office. The sun having partially melted the snow, I accompanied the party. We had an excellent sermon from the minister, who, residing at Yarrow Fews, about seven miles off, after the service there, officiates every Sunday afternoon at the Kappa. The evening was spent by the family in reading

aloud from the Bible, singing hymns, and perusing various books. When Tibbie Shiels undertook the reception of guests she set her face against having her house open for Sunday excursionists, and it soon became known that however welcome a large party with carriage and horses were during the week, such an arrival on Sunday was not convenient. No spirits were ever supplied at her house.

Notwithstanding the snow, we had during this visit much enjoyment. In the early part of the day ere the sun got hot all was clothed with white to the edge of the Loch, and the contrast formed between the clear blue water and the pure mantle with which the hills were decked was glorious. The wind being too gusty for the boat on one of the days, we walked to the foot of the Loch, crossing the bridge over the Meggat. Up that wild valley, formerly a royal hunting ground, the scenery was magnificent, the awful precipices of Cramelt Craig, generally covered with snow more or less till the middle of May, towering at its head. About three-quarters of a mile above the bridge stands Henderlands, now a large sheep and grazing farm, but formerly the stronghold of the Cockburns, whose castle was well fortified and around which their retainers lived. Cockburn was one of the Border Rievers, who along with their followers lived principally by making forays to the English border, from which they drove large herds of cattle as well as supplying themselves with other booty. James the Fifth, determined to put these marauders down, collected a body of troops, who, marching up Ettrick, slew Adam Scott, of Tushielaw, after which they crossed over the hills to St. Mary's Loch, and arriving at Henderland, whilst Cockburn was at dinner, summoned him at once to surrender. Unfortunately for him, his retainers were out on a foray, and being defenceless, he had no alternative but to give himself up. When the preparations for his execution by hanging were ready, his terrified wife, unable to bear the shocking sight, ran

about one hundred yards away to a waterfall, and sitting down on a little mound at the foot waited till all was over. The place to which she retired has ever since been called the Dool Linn. The mound on which she sat still remains. A few insignificant ruins still mark the spot where feudal grandeur once reigned supreme. The little enclosures attached to the huts of the retainers can yet be traced. The bodies of Cockburn and his lady were buried on a hillock abjoining, and over the remains is a tombstone, with this inscription — "Here lies Perys of Cockburn, and Marjory his wife." The hillock has been walled round and planted.

Passing the Free Kirk, school, and schoolmaster's house, and post-office, we proceeded along the Selkirk road by the side of the Loch for a mile where, near the foot of Brackenlaw, are the ruins of St. Mary's Chapel and burial ground. This ancient chapel an offshoot from Melrose, and is famous in Border history. The Loch takes its name from the chapel. A few scattered trees mark the spot where many an outlaw lies buried and where the shepherd of the present day in that district finds his last earthly home. Many are the ballads and traditions extant respecting this interesting chapel, but I will content myself with quoting one stanza—

> St. Mary's Loch lies shimmering still,
> But St. Mary's kirk bell's lang dune ringing,
> There's naething now but the grave stane hill
> To tell o' a' their loud Psalm singing.

On the opposite side of the loch we saw the farm-house of Bowerhope nestling under the steep and precipitous Bowerhope Law. This is the only farmstead on the immediate shore of that beautiful piece of water. The occupier lets off a portion of the building in the summer months to any family who may like such a charming retreat.

Before commencing fishing we noticed a short distance from the foot of the loch the ruins of Dryhope Tower, also famous in Border song. It was built by the second son of

Sir Walter Scott, of Thirlestane, in 1613. In this now dark and lonely tower that splendid beauty, Mary Scott, the flower of Yarrow, was born. Here she resided, and here was married to young Scott, of Harden. Further up "the Hope," in a secluded and well fortified position, now called "The Auld Wa's," was the residence of Dick of Dryhope, whose feats are chronicled in the account of the meeting of Commissioners for settling the disputes between the English and Scotch marches, one instance may suffice to shew the state of the country and the character of the man. July, 1586, "Dick of Dryup and their complices had taken by open force 400 kine and oxen from the Drysykes, of Bewcastle," and "Andrew Rootledge, of the Nook, complained upon the same individuals for 400 kine and oxen stolen, besides burning his house, corn, and insicht." This noted freebooter, usually called Dickie of Dryhope, was endowed with wonderful courage. He was one of the clan that accompanied Bucleuch, April 13, 1596, when he rescued Kinmont Willie from Carlisle Tower, after being captured by Salkeld, contrary to the truce of Border law. He was more ready with his lance than with his letters. According to Spottiswoode, William Armstrong, or, as he was usually designated, Kinmont Willie, on riding home up the Liddell from a friendly meeting with Lord Scroope, Mr. Salkeld, and others belonging both sides of the Border, where, under protection of a truce they had been settling differences, was pursued by the English, and after a chase of four miles, captured and taken to Carlisle Castle. Bucleuch was indignant at this breach of faith, and, though Kinmont Willie was famous as a Border thief, he applied to Lord Scroope and Mr. Salkeld for his being set at liberty. Bucleuch, getting no redress, resolved to work the prisoner's relief. He employed trusty persons to take a view of the postern gate and to measure the height of the wall, resolved either to scale it with ladders or to break through with

instruments. All being in readiness he assembled 200 horsemen, amongst whom was Dick of Dryhope, and fixed the place of meeting at Morton, ten miles from Carlisle, one hour before sunset. With this company he passed over the Esk, and about two hours before the day broke he crossed the Eden below Carlisle Bridge though the river was swollen with the late rains. Halting by the side of the Caldew, a portion of the company applied their ladders to the wall. These proving too short they had recourse to their instruments, with which they made an opening near the postern sufficient to admit one man at a time. The postern was soon broken open, the watchmen secured, the chamber in which the prisoner lay, unlocked, and Kinmont Willie was brought forth. Immediately the rescuing party blew the trumpet, and amidst much shouting bore off their prize, he with a loud voice bidding Lord Scroope and Mr. Salkeld, who were in the castle, "good night." The whole company, after sending back the captive watchmen, re-crossed the Eden, and, in spite of some opposition on the part of the Grahams, reached Scottish ground two hours after sunrising. No blood seems to have been shed, nor was any injury done to private property. This exploit was looked upon by contemporary writers as one of the most remarkable on record. Queen Elizabeth was sadly annoyed about it.

We now set to work with our rods, and were pleased to find, in spite of the fierce showers of snow, the fish rose well, and for a couple of hours we had fair sport. On our way back we called on Mr. McAllister, the schoolmaster and precentor at the free kirk, and also a capital angler, who would gladly have had us take "a wee drap" to help us through the snow which now laid four inches deep. However, we reached the cottage at dusk, and were soon sitting with Mrs. Sutton at the tea table, where, through her kind forethought, a plentiful repast was spread. Talking over our adventures, with reading and conversation, closed the day.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

VII.

Description of St. Mary's Cottage — Scene from "Noctes Ambrosianæ" — Covenanters — Birkhill — Janet and the Tramp — New Abbey — Loch Kinder — Lord Dangerfield.

TUESDAY morning arrived and preparations for departure followed, but ere I take my leave for the present of a spot at which for several years I have had great enjoyment, I feel inclined to allude again to the features surrounding St. Mary's Loch. As I have said, there is a good road from Beattock and Moffat, which also carries you down the Vale of Yarrow to Selkirk, eighteen miles distant from The Cottage. This road from Chapel Hope to the foot of the loch, a distance of over five miles, is comparatively level and very soon dry after rain. The hills are not difficult to ascend, and the glens up the Meggat valley are wild and romantic. The air is dry and bracing. The accommodation for visitors at the cottage called "St. Mary's Cottage" consists of a parlour or coffee-room with two single beds, a room over with similar sleeping accommodation, and a room out of the kitchen with two beds. At the north side of the cottage a spacious wooden erection has been placed, with an outer and inner door, the latter giving access between the two beds to the kitchen. This erection, called the "Tent," is much used in the season by the large parties who come for the day. from Moffat, Innerleithen, Selkirk, and Edinburgh. It affords great convenience also to the angler, where he can bestow his tackle. Mr. Richardson's

sister, Mrs. Mitchell, at Crosscleugh, about 400 yards up the Ettrick road, supplies two capital bedrooms for the cottage when required.

From my description the appliances may appear somewhat rude, but any apparent lack on that score is fully compensated for by the hearty kindness of Mr. Richardson and his helpers. Apart from its being a true specimen of the accommodation of bygone days, its atmosphere is full of pleasing and interesting associations. Here the late Professor Wilson found in angling and the companionship of congenial spirits, such relaxation as restored his overtaxed energies. The scenes of one or more of that amusing production "Noctes Ambrosianæ," are found at Tibbie's, from one of which I quote the following:—

Scene II. of "Noctes" 36—North, Tickler, and Shepherd meet after a fishing and shooting expedition at Tibbie's. Shepherd: "A cosybield, sirs, this o' Tibbie's; just like a bit wren's nest." Then follows an amusing discussion as to whether it is more like a wren's nest or an ant hill. Then comes the dinner, ushered in with divers soups, during which the shepherd (James Hogg) relates a tale.—North: "Thank ye, James. I have heard you tell the tale better, and not so well, but never before at a Noctes. Another tureen?"—Shepherd: "Na, Tibbie? the fish"—which she brings in—"you see, sirs. I wasna leein' about the sawmon. It cam up in the seat o' the gig. Tibbie was for cuttin't into twa cuts, but I like to see a sawmon served up in his integrity." The sawmon having been discussed,—Shepherd: "I ca't a plain, simple, manly, substantial forest denner in Tibbie's ain unpretending style; and hadna we limited it to our ain killen, I ken we should hae had the hin quarter o' a sheep that's been in pickle sin the last day o'hairst, and a breist of veal frae Bourhope, as white's a hen." Tibbie enters, and sets down with a smile her own two dishes of mutton and veal, with a fresh peck of potatoes

from the dripping pan, and ditto of mashed turnips. — North: "Excellent creature." Shepherd: "She's a' that, sir." And when the monument to the Ettrick Shepherd, placed on the hillside near, was unveiled, more than two thousand spectators made the hills re-echo with their hearty cheers. Hogg, in his interesting tale of the Covenanters, entitled, "The Brownie of Bodsbeck," recounts the thrilling events which took place at Chapel Hope, about a mile from Tibbie's, and in the immediate locality. It was amongst the hills surrounding Chapel Hope where the Covenanters made one of their last stands, and where, finding themselves hemmed in, they were reduced to starvation. Yet they remained firm to their principles, and neither the branding-iron, the mutilation of the ears, the prisoners' chains, nor the fear of instant death, shook their faith or made them waver from upholding the glorious doctrine of religious freedom. Some of their bodies lie on the hillsides, and some were borne across the mountains by the fugitives and buried in Ettrick kirk-yard.

There are no mines to disfigure the hills or pollute the lochs. The only sounds which fall on the ear away from the poultry yard are the bleating of sheep, the barking of a shepherd's dog, the call of the black-cock or grouse, the melancholy whistle of the curlew, the notes of song birds, and now and then a swollen burn rushing down a steep hill-side.

Stopping at Birkhill on our return Janet again came out to meet us. As I remarked previously she was a good specimen of a Scotch matron of the shepherd class. The house stands alone, not a dwelling within a mile and a half. Her husband, with the other shepherd, were one day both from home on their master's business, and Janet was left with a young hired girl. A tramp came into the house, and seeing no man about he got rather outrageous, and in the end was going to help himself to one of the braxey hams that were

hanging up in the kitchen which was more than she could put up with, so she asked him if any person saw him come into the house — he replied "No"—upon that she rejoined, "Then the d——l a ane shall see you gang out," "Lassie bring me the axe," addressing the servant girl. The man made out of the house with all speed and never troubled her again. Two men came to the house one night and wanted to be let in, but finding the door locked they got a strong stick and tried to lift the door off the hinges, but Janet put her foot on the stick and so managed to keep them off. Then remembering a small window at the back of the house she ran to it with the axe in her hand and finding one man in the act of getting in she swore she would cut his head off if he did not go back. Janet then got the window closed and got hold of the gun with which she threatened to shoot them if they did not go away. Fortunately this had the desired effect, but poor Janet got a severe fright as the gun was unloaded, and she did not understand charging one.

In 1872 we went to New Abbey on May 20th in order to have two days' fishing in Loch Kinder. On reaching Dumfries we took a carriage for the remaining seven miles, going through a charming country bordering on the estuary of the Nith. The situation of the village of New Abbey is very pretty, but apart from Loch Kinder the principal charm is Sweet Heart Abbey, which lies at the west end of the village. This Abbey, the ruins of which are remarkably beautiful, and comparatively seldom visited except by those residing in the adjoining localities was founded in 1275 by Devorgilla, a daughter of Allan, lord of Galloway, her husband's body having been buried near the site of the Abbey. When Devorgilla died in 1289, at the age of 80, the heart of her husband which she had caused to be embalmed and deposited in a richly decorated ivory box was solemnly shut up with her own body in sepulture near the high altar. 'Hug de Burgh, prior of Lanercost, composed

the following elegy on Devorgilla, which was inscribed on her tomb, which, as the translation extant is so very rude, I give in the original Latin :—

In Dervorvilla moritur sensata Sibilla
Cum Marthaque pia contemplativa Maria
Da Dervorvillæ requie rex summe potiri
Quam tegit iste lapis cor pariterque viri.

The Abbey was called from this "Sweet Heart Abbey," and got its more recent name of New Abbey on account of its being the last Abbey erected in that part of the kingdom. The monks were of the Cistercian order. In 1587 it became vested in the Crown. Some time during last century it was let for its stones, and would have been entirely pulled down if 40*l.* had not been subscribed to avert such a catastrophe. It stands in twenty acres of ground, and was surrounded by a strong wall, part of which still remains. From the rising ground on the east the view of it is lovely. It is the property of Mr. Oswald, of Auchincruive, who also owns Loch Kinder, and to whose liberality we were indebted for the privilege of fishing. About a mile from New Abbey, at the foot of the steep slope of Criffel, is Loch Kinder, which is rather over a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide. We had a boat and a man, and the morning after our arrival we commenced operations, with a nice breeze and an occasional shower. The trout, when in the humour, are not only free risers, but run a nice size, up to 1lb. They are well fed and are finely flavoured. We had fair success. Small winged flies dressed with the inside feather from a corncrake's wing, hare lug, and deep yellow silk, and inside of a woodcock's wing, hare lug under wings, and green body, along with a Royal Charlie and Broughton Point are good killers, when the trout, which are occasionally uncertain, rise well. At the upper end of the loch is an island on which are the ruins of a chapel. There is also a capital boathouse in which we had a substantial lunch sent there from the inn.

The walks and rides about New Abbey are very fine, and afford much enjoyment to the tourist and angler, but further details of my experience there, which was of a pleasurable character, will be referred to in a future chapter.

I found on Loch Kinder a fine specimen of the fly known to anglers as the Grannam, the dressing of which I have described above. The natural fly is beautiful. Its gauze-like wings are finely marked, and the lower part of its body is a bright delicate green. Whilst admiring it I could not feel surprised at the trout eagerly seizing so tempting a morsel.

March, 1873, arrived, and lengthening days brought a longing desire to visit St. Mary's. After various letters between me and my friends at Scotby, creating sensations such as school boys feel as their holidays approach, the time was fixed, and on the 24th March we all met in Carlisle station. We had a pleasant greeting at Birkhill, and a hearty welcome at the cottage. We were sorry to notice our venerable hostess, now in her 93rd year, shewing signs of increasing weakness. On coming into the kitchen next morning, whilst our breakfast was being prepared, I noticed that she was in bed, a round table, on which was some bread and milk and a Bible, at her side. After a little conversation and inquiring how I had slept, I found that it was an enjoyment to her to be read to out of the Bible, so I at once commenced, and derived much pleasure in continuing the practice whenever I was there, as long as she lived. During one of the times in which I was so occupied, a caller, whom I must introduce to my readers, looked in, and sitting down by the fire, lit his pipe. When the reading was over I accosted the visitor, who was Walter Turnbull, otherwise better known as Lord Dangerfield. His home was at Yarrow Fews, about seven miles off, but having taken the road running past the two lochs to keep in repair, he made for himself of hedge stake-rails, and other waifs and strays

cast ashore in storms, a hut under a bank on St. Mary's Loch, close to the Selkirk road, but under cover of a few alders, in which he lived during the week. In a time of storm the loch came close to his door step. He was over sixty, with a fine, weather-beaten-face. One morning I was taking an early walk, and, looking in upon the old man, I found him reading his Bible, which was his daily practice before turning out to his work. He was a good specimen of a descendant from an old Border family. He delighted in his Bible, and was a diligent attender at the kirk, where he appeared dressed like a well-to-do farmer, and when dark winter nights drew on, he knew how to use the low and the leister. There was no hypocrisy about him. One evening at the cottage, the neighbours were invited to hear the Precentor from Ettrick sing. When it was Lord Dangerfield's turn to call for a song, he said, Gie us "Of a' the airts," and whilst listening the tears trickled down his cheeks.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

VIII.

Translation of Epitaph — St Mary's — Ettrick Kirk—Fishing Scene—Dalwhinnie — Donald Kennedy — Loch Ericht.

My kind friend, Mr. Henry Wilson, having placed in my hand his translation of the Latin epitaph on the tomb at Sweet Heart Abbey, I will commence this chapter with giving it to my readers with his observation on the same, as follows : —

From Dervorvilla, Death snatched the wise Sibilla,
With Martha, the devoted, and Mary always adoring,
Grant her, Father Supreme, Thy peace and rest everlasting,
Whom hides this marble cold and her "sweet husband's heart."

"A beautiful epitaph."

For some days the weather was charming, quite summer-like. We made use of the boat accompanied by our excellent boatman, Robert Laidlaw. The scenery was lovely, and the views up the valley of the Meggat magnificent. Fishing during two days, with a cloudless sky, with scarcely a ripple on the water, was almost useless. The genial days brought visitors to St. Mary's. One gentleman, who had walked a considerable distance, greatly appreciated not only the air, but each morning before breakfast, ere the hoar frost was melted, he left the cottage in an easy dress and went up the hillside, above Hogg's monument, where he stood under a little cascade which gave him a natural shower bath. I was unable for some time to detect from his accent to what country he owed his birth, but one evening a discussion on politics waxing warm, I perceived that the place of his

nativity was Scotland, and remarking how nearly he had lost his mother tongue, he acknowledged having used considerable effort to overcome the Scotch idiom, upon which I told him plainly that he ought to be ashamed of himself for abjuring a useful and honourable token of his nationality. Towards the end of the week we had some nice sport.

On Sunday I went with Mr. Richardson and Robert Laidlaw across the hills by the pony track, a distance of five and a half miles, to Ettrick. Ascending 750 feet above the loch, we had an excellent view of that mass of mountains from which the Tweed, the Annan, and Moffatt water take their rise. We then descended about 750 feet into the Ettrick valley and soon reached the kirk. It was interesting to see the shepherds from the distant sheep-farms assembling there. Lord Napier, now Baron Ettrick, when living at Thirlstane Castle, is, along with his family, a constant attender. We had an excellent sermon from the Minister, the Rev. J. Falconer. On our way back we stopped at a spring where a cup was lying on the grass for the use of the thirsty pedestrian. The distance by the carriage road is nine miles.

A fine westerly breeze rippled the loch the next morning and off we set in the boat in high spirits at the prospect of good sport. It was not long before Mr. Sutton had a rise, and on hooking the fish Robert exclaimed, "That's a guid yan." "Yes," my friend called out, "it's a sea trout." Then followed the excitement of the capture. A fish 4½lbs. was placed in the basket. "Hollo, Mr. Braithwaite! you've hold now," and after a good fight another sea trout was secured. This was smaller, being under 3lbs. As the boat drifted towards Meggat Foot we each kept getting now and then a trout. Just as the boat was nearing the edge I cast my flies close to the bank. The instant the point-fly touched the water up jumped a fish, which I hooked, Robert exclaiming with great emphasis, "That's a guid yan." The moment

the fish felt the hook, off it shot round the bow of the boat into deeper water, my wheel whizzing cheerfully. A fine leap revealed a handsome trout of more than the ordinary size for St. Mary's Loch. Whilst reeling up my line it darted right under the boat, and I fully expected to find the dropper flies fast in the keel and the fish to break loose, but that catastrophe was averted, and all being clear I soon had the pleasure of placing in my pannier a beautiful trout which weighed over three pounds. It was 18¼in. in length, and 4in. in breadth. On reaching the cottage at 2-30, in addition to the two described, I had five others, weighing over half a pound each. Placing our spoil on two dishes, Tibbie looked at them with pleasure, gratified with our having had a fair morning's sport.

In the early part of April, 1879, Mr. Sutton got a trout 4½lbs., and late in the evening at the end of May, 1881, my friend, Mr. Crawhall, of Durham, got one of 5lbs. Both were taken with the artificial fly, otherwise the general run in St. Mary's Loch is from a ¼ up to 16 ounces. Occasionally the trout in a loch may be seen rising over the whole surface, but anglers find the shallows where the water does not exceed about six feet, and along the banks, the best places for good success.

Being at Melrose in September of the same year with one of my daughters attending a meeting of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archæological Society, I took the opportunity afterwards of joining Mr. and Mrs. Sutton at Dalwhinnie, one of the highest stations on the highland railway, and contiguous to Loch Ericht. It is a wild spot surrounded with moors. There are a few trees which afford shelter to the garden, and also to one enclosed field off which hay is secured for their requirements during winter. Lying 1,200 feet above sea level, on the slope of the cold and snowy Grampians, it did not surprise us to find vegetation retarded. It was the 4th of September, and the strawberries in the

garden were just well set, some still in bloom. The hotel was comfortable and well managed, and boats and boatmen await the call of the visitors at reasonable charges. One of the boatmen, Donald Kennedy, was a retainer of Clunie Macpherson, of Clunie. Three of his ancestors fell in the battle of Culloden, and it was a great pleasure to him to relate the history, as handed down in Gaelic, of the wanderings and adventures of the Prince, and to point out the various places where he lay concealed. How his eye brightened when alluding to Prince Charles Stuart, and though wishful in the sight of God to fulfil his duty to Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, the abiding attachment to the Stuarts was self evident. Having taken with me a copy of "Ascanius, or the Young Adventurer, being a true history translated from a manuscript privately handed about at the Court of Versailles," printed in Dublin in 1774, I lent it to Donald Kennedy, who returned it as we were leaving with this remark, "It's all true as its handed down in Gaelic." He also subsequently gave me some interesting particulars not generally known of the history of that devoted follower of the Stuarts, his chieftain, Clunie Macpherson, after the battle of Culloden, so disastrous to their cause. Macpherson, of Clunie, lay concealed for some years in the caves and mosses of his own estate; all his movements were known to his faithful clansmen; 1,000*l.* reward was offered to any one who would reveal his place of concealment. Eighty men, a portion of the 34th Regiment, under lieutenant—afterwards Sir Hector—Munro, stationed in Badenoch, scoured the country for two years, and were constantly prowling about, sometimes near his place of concealment, but could never find the exact spot. They burned his house, and his lady gave birth to a child (afterwads Colonel Macpherson) in a limekiln, fitted up temporarily for her accommodation. On one occasion when he was visiting his wife the military were breaking open the front door

whilst he was escaping through the back. His retainers kept true to their chief, and he finally escaped to France, where in the course of a year he succumbed to illness brought on by the troubles and exposures to which he had been subjected.

Loch Ericht is eighteen miles long. The scenery is both wild and grand. We got a few trout, but were not successful in hooking a *ferox*, which abound in some portions of it. I spent a very happy day on the loch with Donald the following year, when he pointed out the places where St. Columb is said to have preached the gospel to the wild natives of that mountainous region, and on which he looked with heartfelt veneration. I am grieved to say during that severe storm which destroyed the Tay Bridge the roof of his hut was damaged, and in repairing it he got a severe cold from which he never recovered, and I was truly sorry to hear of his death.

I am not left without mementos of that truly noble-hearted and good man. In 1878 he sent me a fine and well-grown specimen of a *salmo ferox*, weighing 12lbs., which was faithfully depicted in water colours by my esteemed friend Mr. Longmaid. The head and skin are carefully preserved, shewing the peculiar formation of the vomer indicative of that species. In his letter accompanying the fish he says, "I had some difficulty in getting it into the boat after I had hooked it," adding, "you will perceive that *he* is a female." On December 25th, 1878, he sent me two volumes of Erskine's works. On the fly leaf by his own hand was written — "From Donald Kennedy, Dalwhinnie, to G. F. Braithwaite, Esq., as love tokens."

Such was Donald Kennedy, and I am pleased to have this opportunity of recording some particulars of one who, though greatly isolated from the means of religious instruction, yet in the one room occupied by himself and his wife for a sleeping and living apartment, under his thatched roof

held communion with his God, reminding one of those lines of the Poet Burns: —

> . . . . . .
> But perhaps in some cottage far apart
> May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul,
> And in His book of Life the inmates poor enrol.

And when opportunities of joining in public worship presented themselves he never failed to avail himself of them. He was universally beloved and respected by all around him, and, though not blessed with wealth, has left behind him in his example a valuable legacy to posterity. After spending two nights at Dalwhinnie we proceeded on Saturday morning to Loch Laggan, twelve miles distant. The road lay through a wild and uncultivated country until we reached the Laggan valley. As we descended the slope we had a good view of Clunie, the residence of the chieftain Macpherson, also of the village of Laggan. After crossing one of the head waters of the Spey we got upon the coach road leading from Fort William to Inverness, over which the mail runs from Fort William to Kingussie, there joining the Highland railway. We then had a fine run and soon reached Loch Laggan.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

IX.

Loch Laggan — Description of Country — Past and Present State of Population in the District — Landlords preparation for the Queen on her way to Inverlocky — Trolling on the Loch — Journey Home via Oban and Loch Lomond.

We found the hotel situated on the west side of Loch Laggan, and not far from the head, commanding a splendid view of that beautiful sheet of water. Bounded on the east by the lofty hills separating it from Loch Ericht, which, partially planted, slope gracefully to the water's edge; and on a plateau underneath one of the hills, nicely elevated above the loch, stood Ardverikie Castle, about two miles from the hotel, the seat of Sir John Ramsden, Bart.

After a hasty lunch we took a boat, and a nice breeze favouring us, we commenced fishing. The trout were a nice size and offered to rise freely, so we were not long in placing what made a good dish in our baskets. The sides of the loch, which is seven miles long, are generally well wooded, and the variety of rocky eminences and shelving gravelly shallows conduce not only to the picturesque, but contribute towards making it an excellent fishing loch. Sailing across we had a capital view of the towering mountains on the west. To the south, in the far distance, was Ben Nevis, with its band of snow which rarely melts. Altogether we were, apart from angling, charmed with Loch Laggan.

This portion of the country, like the neighbourhood of Loch Ericht, abounds with romantic interest. It is not very

far distant from the country of Lochiel, one of the staunchest friends of the Prince Charles. The grave of Fergus, one of the early kings of Scotland, is said to be not far off, neither is Dundalamh — the ruins of a good specimen of an ancient British fort. Near the hotel is a burying ground, and the old Kirk of Laggan — the ancient Roman Catholic Chapel of the district, where an old altar and granite font are still extant. From the appearance of the ground it was still used as a resting place for the dead. Meeting with a resident I entered into conversation with him, and found that the native population was rapidly decreasing—as many as fifty had emigrated that summer.

As I stood and surveyed the beautiful loch, with the hills on the opposite shore, my thoughts wandered over the past, and fancy pictured the thatched huts and patches of ripening oats and plots of potatoes studding the lower slopes, mothers with their children around the cottage doors, the fathers either away fishing or occupied with their little farms; all ready to obey their chieftain's call. A shadow was cast over the landscape on hearing that a great area of the wild and mountainous country lying between Laggan and Ericht had been sold by Clunie Macpherson to Sir James Ramsden, who was justified whilst standing on a portion of rising ground overlooking his boundless acres in declaring, like Alex. Selkirk, "I am monarch of all I survey." My sympathies were moved, and I grieved that the representative of an ancient and honourable line of Highland chieftains should have disposed of even a slice of the patrimony handed down to him by his forefathers. Alas, the wealthy Saxon was able to give an amount of gold for the land which when invested yielded a much larger return to the chieftain than he was able to get from the rents paid by his retainers for their little holdings, and the produce of the shooting ground and the sheep walks, so that portion was sold.

On Sunday morning I walked, accompanied by my daughter, to the Kirk at Laggan, seven miles away, yet the nearest place of public worship. It was well attended, but all the service was in Gaelic. Judging from his manner the minister preached an impressive sermon. On Monday our host, a fine handsome Highlander, was much occupied with getting harness cleaned and other matters, which led to the inquiry, was anything special in prospect? "Oh, yes, the Queen will pass here to-morrow morning on her way to Inverlochy Castle, about 29 miles off, at the foot of Ben Nevis, and I have to supply horses for one stage, as well as postillions. I intend riding one of the horses drawing her Majesty's carriage." Later on in the day he was trying on a pair of buckskin tights, in which his naturally elastic movements seemed greatly impeded, but when he got into the top boots he was in a strait, first one foot was placed on the ground with a groan and a look of agony, then as the other followed his features grew much distorted, and when he attempted to walk he was obliged to seek ease in stooping, to the imminent peril of his leather tights, which became painfully distended. However, to my surprise, they stood the strain, verifying the trite saying—"There's nothing like leather." I advised him to take off his stockings. "Oh," he replied with a wince, "I've done that." "Well," I said, "you never can honour her Majesty in those boots." "No, I don't think I can." So, by the advice of his wife, he sent a man off six miles for another pair belonging to a friend, which he hoped would be more roomy. Tuesday morning came, and along with it in due time came Queen Victoria. The horses having gone forward three miles, the carriages did not stop at the hotel, so our view was a transient one. The Queen was so simply dressed that no one, ignorant of the procedure, would have taken particular notice.

On our host's return he told us all had gone off well.

The borrowed boots being rather large were made easy by a little stuffing. Her Majesty alighted to walk up one or two hills, and when he remounted the tights stood the strain. He was charmed with the kindly manner of his royal passenger. After the cortege had passed I went, accompanied by my daughter, to troll for a *ferox*. I had a small trout for bait. Soon after passing Ardverikie Castle we had a good run, which, after some excitement, resulted in the capture of a beautiful trout weighing 2½lbs. I made, along with Mr. Sutton, another attempt to catch a *ferox*, which was unsuccessful. We were advised to take a large boat, and two men at the oars who, in spite of all we could say, persisted in pulling us along at the rate of four or five miles an hour, and when we remonstrated they told us that it was the way to catch a *ferox*. So being incredulous we turned our attention to fly fishing, in which my daughter joined, who very soon caught a trout of ½lb. The hotel was very convenient, the mail coach between Fort William and Kingussie calling every day.

My late friend Frank Buckland having arranged to spend two nights at Hawesmead, we were obliged reluctantly to leave Mr. and Mrs. Sutton on Wednesday, and drive thirty-two miles along the valley of the Spean, past Ben Nevis and Inverlochy, to Fort William, where we joined the steamer to Oban, which we reached at 8.30. We spent the night at the Craigard Hotel. The coach road from Laggan to Fort William is well worthy of the tourist's notice. The ordinary route across the Highlands is along the Caledonian Canal, but should the weather prove favourable I hardly know a more charming or romantic ride. On the day in question we had heavy showers, with a strong wind, but my next journey over it the following year, 1874, was performed under a cloudless summer sky, and as we then left Fort William for Loch Laggan, Ben Nevis at our right stood out in glorious majesty. Passing along its base we entered the

valley of the Spean, with the distant Grampians in front, and to our right the range to the east of Lochaber, crowned with the lofty Ben Aulder. To our left we had the ranges of mountains, along whose sides are the parallel roads of Glen Roy — about which from time to time so much has been written. The roads extend along each side of the glen, and are three in number, running parallel with each other over every nook and crag. In some places they are sixty feet in width, and separated from each other by double that distance. Glen Roy must at some distant period have been a vast lake which, having subsided at long intervals, has left its different margins, in appearance like broad roads or terraces. The Spean is an excellent salmon river, and in our drive to Fort William we saw more than one party of anglers busy at the tempting pools. After an early breakfast the following morning at the Craigard Hotel we mounted the coach, and had a glorious ride along Loch Etive up the Awe to the Brander Pass then along the steep slope of Ben Cruachan, with Loch Awe beneath us. In the river are stages of wood, on which anglers fishing for salmon can stand when pursuing their sport. The gorge through which the river runs on leaving the loch is an impressive scene ; indeed, the ride from Oban to Dalmally is full of grandeur and beauty. Alas, the "iron horse" now commands the situation, and the tourist is hurried along, unable to enjoy the varying features of this most interesting locality.

Passing Dalmally at the foot of Glenorchy, we crossed a hilly country, through which, when the horses flagged, the guard dismounted, and when his short whip failed, the driver called out, "Speak Gaelic to them," which had the immediate effect of quickening their pace. Two or three coaches were stopping at Tyndrum. One was starting for Ballachulish, by which two ladies who had come so far by rail, wished to go, but when the driver saw their huge boxes he declined to take them. The ladies shewed their tickets, but to no

purpose. He said his coach would require two more horses. They pleaded hard, but he was inexorable, and told them it would be a lesson for them never to come into that country with such unwieldy belongings. In the end they had to hire a trap for their boxes. On reaching Inverarnan, we went on board the steamer, which took us to Balloch, near the foot of Loch Lomond, thence by rail to Glasgow, which we left at nine p.m., reaching home at 2 30 a.m.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

X.

Loch Earnhead — The Trossachs — Loch Katrine — Fishing, with Description of Scenery — Loch Lomond — Drive from Tarbet to Inverary — Loch Awe — Brander Pass — Glen Orchy — Inverouran Hotel — Loch Tulla — Catching a Fine Trout.

In May, 1874, after spending a day in Edinburgh I proceeded to Loch Earnhead, in order to have a few days' fishing, accompanied by my wife and daughter. I had some fair sport amongst the trout, and whilst trolling got a char about half a pound. As I turned it out of my pannier at the inn, the landlord told me that when he took the hotel some years before, he found that the potting of char had been extensively carried on, and a large quantity of empty fish pots bore out the truth of the information. But he said very few char had been caught during his residence there. What has caused such a result I could not ascertain. The trout have not diminished in the same way. Loch Earnhead Hotel is well situated, commanding beautiful views of the loch, and is an excellent centre for charming excursions. Within easy distance of Loch Voile, the braes of Balquhidder and Killin, at the head of Loch Tay, the tourist and angler need never be at a loss for recreation and amusement.

The time of our departure arrived, and we left with regret, soon to enter another attractive district. Mounting the coach at Callander, we shortly arrived at the Trossachs' Hotel, at which my companions alighted, anxious to have a little rest, whilst I proceeded on with my fishing tackle to Loch Katrine. The scenery was lovely, and as we entered

the Trossachs I was in raptures. The mingling of abrupt precipices, rocky knolls, and huge boulders, with the foliage of the dark green pine, the graceful larch, the elegant birch, and the massive oak, the latter displaying its tender leaves with their golden tints; here and there ferns uncurling their delicate fronds, with the contrast of the rock, clothed with grey lichen. All this thrown together in wild confusion, yet forming one harmonious picture, so delighted me that I rose involuntarily up from my seat on the coach to ask the driver to allow me to alight so that I might run back for my wife and daughter, to share the enjoyment with me; but remembering that they had wished for a little rest, I retook my seat and watched for the first glimpse of the loch. On dismounting, I arranged with a boatman, and off we set, trolling with two rods and using fresh minnows. Soon I had a run, and on securing my fish was much pleased with its appearance—dark olive green back and a bright bluish white body, nicely spotted, weighing about three quarters of a pound. Whilst sailing between Ellen's Isle and the shore, just as I had hooked my fourth trout, a gentle voice fell on my ear, and on looking round I saw through the bushes my wife and daughter, who had walked to meet me. Directly I had netted the fish, we landed, and taking them into the boat we sailed round the island, listening to the boatman's descriptions and quotations from the Lady of the Lake, which were only cut short by the catching of another trout. We all walked back to the hotel together, expatiating on the extreme loveliness and grandeur of the scenery. The following morning saw me again on the loch, with a similar measure of success, after which we made our way by steamer and coach to Inversnaid, thence to Tarbet, where we arrived about six o'clock, just in time to let me have a try on Loch Lomond. The boatman said it was too late in the day. However, I persevered, and off we set, passing under Rob Roy's cave. Just as hope was waning, a fish struck

and I had the pleasure of depositing in my pannier a Loch Lomond trout, the first and only one I ever caught on that loch.

Towards the end of August my friend Mr. Sutton proposed that I should accompany him and Mrs. Sutton to Loch Awe. So, leaving home at three a.m., they joined me in the train at the Carlisle station, for Greenock, where we took the steamer to the head of Loch Goil, thence by coach through Hell's Glen to St. Anthony's Ferry, reaching Inverary at 4 30. A carriage awaited us on the pier, which took us, after refreshing ourselves, to Portsonachan, where we arrived about 7 30. The weather became wild and the loch tumultuous, which made fishing out of the question. Nevertheless we had the enjoyment of glorious scenery. We took a boat down to the Awe and were well repaid. Indeed, the entrance to that bold ravine through which the Awe runs from the loch is magnificent, and though the views from the road are imposing, from the loch itself they are grand and sublime. No place that I have visited similar in character has left such an impression of majestic beauty as the gorge of the Awe.

After spending two days at Portsonachan we decided to go by Dalmally and Glenorchy to Inverouran Hotel on the banks of Loch Tulla. We had a grand mountain ride across the hills, on which droves of wild-looking cattle were roaming at large, some of them reminding me of the yaks on the mountains of Thibet. The road up the Orchy commands fine scenery. About half-way up the glen we saw anglers at work with their long salmon rods, and the tempting pools made us long to be at work also. Inverouran Hotel we found singularly arranged, many of the bedrooms opening out of a long corridor on the ground floor, along which the traffic of the house seemed to pass, so the constant tramp, tramp, on the bare wood made sleep until after a late hour impossible. Next morning we engaged a

boat and man to take us on Loch Tulla, on which there was a nice ripple, but the fish were in no humour for the fly, so we tried trolling. I put on a large "phantom," which was scarcely well at work before a fish seized it. Presently out leaped a grand trout, another tug followed, the top of the rod unbent, and all was over. I had put on a line the gut of which was chafed. No use in fretting, the disaster must be repaired, so I attached a new "phantom" on sound gut to the line, and letting off forty yards, we proceeded. In five minutes another tug, and whizz went the reel, Mr. Sutton exclaiming "That's a salmon!" and anxious as he always was to aid in the capture, whether on my rod or his own, he reeled up his line so that the coast might be clear. After a good fight, during which hopes and fears alternated, a trout weighing over five pounds was placed in the basket, and which on our return the landlord exposed to the view of the visitors.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

XI.

Blackmount Deer Forest — Decline of the Native Population — Cause of that Decline — Unseasonable Salmon — Frail Boat — Tyndrum — A Few Hours Nice Fly Fishing — Journey to St. Mary's Loch — Carriage Sticking in a Snow Drift — Horse Frightened with the Snow — Carriage Extricated by the Aid of Shepherds.

On the north side of Loch Tulla is Ardvrecknish, a shooting lodge belonging to the Marquis of Breadalbane, and as it had been taken for a time by Lord Dudley, his servants, along with his hairdresser, arrived during our stay to be in readiness for his lordship. A large broad-built boat gave them great amusement, the loch resounding with their screams and laughter. The kirk is two miles from the hotel, and we were informed that service was held there every third Sunday. The surrounding country for miles, especially to the north, is wild and uncultivated. The name of a large area, "Blackmount Deer Forest," sounds full of meaning. Formerly the population was considerable for a Highland district, but a change has also taken place here, and the tourist may walk a long distance without seeing a house or an inhabitant. To those who linger on past scenes when the chieftain dwelt amongst his clan, every one of whom would lay down his life for his feudal lord, the change is painful, and inclines them to dwell, like Goldsmith in "The Deserted Village," on the happiness which reigned in the past. Though the soil in the Western Highlands is capable of growing cereals, the climate is unfavourable owing to the amount of rain, and the corn, except in unusually fine

seasons, has to be cut when imperfectly ripe. When no extensive disease exists amongst potatoes they are generally a fair crop. Enterprising agriculturists might find it profitable to turn their attention to grazing after the land was well drained and brought under cultivation, but the expense to the owner would be considerable, and the great demand for shooting ground, deer forests, and salmon fishings tempts the proprietors either to sell or lease their mountain land. When that is the case the original tenants become an inconvenience, and, finding that they are not wanted, and having learned by the constant intercourse of later times with their wealthy neighbours the value of gold, a readiness for change is begotten in their minds, and they not unwillingly seek their fortunes under more propitious skies. This is not surprising, particularly when we call to mind the sufferings that the Western Highlanders have undergone during a hard winter following on the heels of a wet autumn. These considerations to some extent reconcile us to changes which otherwise would appear harsh and oppressive.

Inverouran is on the main road from Tyndrum and Dalmally to Ballachuilish *viâ* Glen Coe, and all the coaches stopped at the hotel. Amongst the passengers I recognised friends from Cheltenham and other distant places. On Saturday the gentlemen who fished that day in the Orchy brought home several salmon, but not the bright clean looking fish that are so tempting as they come direct from the sea; no, they were dark and slimy, being covered with the secretion natural to all migratory *salmonidæ* when ascending rivers. This secretion enables them to move easily amongst the stones and protects them from being injured when leaping over jagged rocks. But two or three months' residence in the river Awe, Loch Awe, and the Orchy, with the absence of the nutritious food abounding in the sea, combined with the constant secretion alluded to, had altogether changed their outward appearance for the

worse, and on Sunday when we had one at dinner the flesh was pale in colour and the flavour insipid — in fact, it was uneatable.

As the one boat there at our service was split open at the bow, and only kept together by a rope, we declined venturing again in so frail a craft, and on Monday evening left for Tyndrum. Seeing a small loch as we approached that place, which looked very tempting, we spoke for a boat and man to be in readiness the next morning, and soon after nine we set off, having about a mile to walk. The loch we found to be a mile in length and a quarter of a mile in width. The trout rose well, but though Mr. Sutton kept catching them I was unable to hook one. This I thought would never do, I must examine my flies, which looked all right — rather brighter than those my friend was using. Being near the edge of the loch I espied a natural fly, and presently saw a trout take one which had settled on the water. I immediately opened my fishing book and found the artificial one; it was the inside of a woodcock's wing, hare lug body, and tied with dull orange silk on to a No. 4 hook. This being an excellent imitation of what were about the edge I put it along with two other similar in character, but varying in colour, on to a new line, and made a fresh start. Twelve fish were already in my friend's pannier, whilst mine was empty. The change was successful, and when we gave up fishing about three o'clock I counted three dozen and my friend four dozen. The trout were very equal in size, averaging about a quarter of a pound each, and on my return home the following day were handed over to the cook who made some delicious pots.

March, 1876, arrived, and with it letters expressing mutual longings to travel northward passed between me and my old friend, which led to Monday, the 13th, being fixed upon as the happy day. The weather had been fine at the beginning of the month, but heavy clouds hung about,

increasing in area from day to day until snow whitened all around. Was it safe to venture? A few gleams of sun caused a telegram to pass along the wires charged with that small but important word — yes. What an amount of happiness depends upon those three letters! Monday came with the thermometer down at 24, still hope was buoyant, and at 9 30 a.m. we all met on the station in Carlisle. A carriage awaited us at Beattock, into which we got, leaving my friend's son, who was accompanying us, to follow his inclination of walking. After stopping a few minutes at the hotel we attempted a start, when a trace broke, and another carriage was sent for from Moffat. In the meantime I also set off walking, as the roads were dry and the air sharp, but ominous clouds hung over the hills, and very soon flakes of snow whitened the ground. In about an hour my friends overtook me, and as the snow became thicker doubts arose as to whether we should proceed, but hope prevailed, and reaching the bridge across the stream issuing from Loch Skene, we commenced the steep ascent along the side of Dobbs Linn. All went right for a quarter of a mile, and our hopes of mastering the pass were buoyant, when, to our dismay, the snow here and there became drifted; still the carriage moved. Alas, the higher we got the heavier the wreaths of snow, and we came to a dead stop. Our driver was George Cavers, a steady, experienced, and trusty man, who encouraged his horses by every means, but all to no purpose. There we were, the snow falling and rapidly increasing our difficulties. I walked up to Birkhill, where I found my young friend sitting by a glorious fire drying his wet stockings. Fortunately the shepherd, William Brown, and his man were in the cottage, so we all went down to the carriage. One horse declined to pull when in a drift, so it was taken out, and fearing some accident I commenced leading it to the top, but I found it no easy job, for whenever it came to a drift it jumped and

snorted till I expected to see it rolling down the almost precipitous descent into the Linn; for you may hold a horse on level ground, but in such a situation as I have described your only course after a certain point is to let go or run the risk of being dragged down the precipice. The drifts, from 2ft. to 3ft. in thickness, were numerous, but at length I reached the top with the horse, and on Mrs. Brown pointing out the stable I led the animal in and tried to fasten it up; in this I failed. On calling out to Mrs. Brown that I wished she would come, "as I did not understand Scotch halters," she replied "I am no accustomed to horses; I'm feared of them striking." So I tied it up as well as I could, and betook myself to the cottage completely done up. I sat before the fire watching the fast falling snow, feeling as if nothing would rouse me again to exertion. Good old Janet made me a steaming cup of coffee, which by degrees restored my exhausted energies, and my spirits were elevated by the arrival of the carriage containing Mrs. Sutton forced through the snow by one horse, aided by Mr. Sutton, his son, two shepherds, and the driver. It was a dangerous feat, for had the horse fallen or become unmanageable the carriage with its occupant would have rolled down fifty or sixty yards into the Linn. The rest of the journey, a descent of four miles, was performed without difficulty, and we all felt thankful to be safely housed and sitting round a bountifully supplied tea-table. All around the house was white, and snow still fell. How we found things next morning must be left for the present.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

XII.

Rain and Snow succeeded by Hard Frost — Pools Frozen — Absence of Sparrows at St. Mary's Loch — Scotchman's View of American Education — A Visit to St. Mary's in June — Great Need for Protection of Trout in Scotland.

A WESTERLY wind, accompanied by heavy showers, greeted us on looking out the following morning, and soon melted the snow on the low land. On asking a shepherd who called at the cottage what he thought about the weather he replied—"It's very fresh." Encouraged by this, we put up our rods, selected our flies, and marched forth to the battle. It was by no means warm, and the wind ceasing to be what the Scotch call "fresh," which means that it was veering to the north, we returned, pleased to find we had together caught a nice plateful of trout. Ere we retired snow began to fall, and four inches lay on the ground when daylight appeared. So long as the lines do not get coated with ice, fly fishing in a loch may at times be successful, though snow lies all around; so after breakfast we trudged along by the water-side, assailed by heavy snow showers, till frost stopped our proceedings by converting the flies into something resembling sugar drops, which the fish did not look upon as either digestible or palatable, and we again sought shelter under what Professor Wilson designated as Tibbie's cosy bield, our panniers being light, though not empty. The evening wore away with reading and conversation and we bid each other good night, hoping the morning would bring a more genial sky. In this we were disappointed; hard frost with driving showers of snow was our lot, but we caught trout. A second winter now set in—snow all day

and frost at night. When Sunday came I could not get over to Ettrick, and on Monday morning we slid on the little pools left by previous floods. Yet we had great enjoyment. It is a pleasure to see the hills clad with their white dress, the only contrast being the bright sky and blue waters of the loch. The birds flocked around Tibbie's, knowing that supplies from kind hearts would be thrown to them. Mr. Richardson allowed no shooting about his premises, and all who came with a gun expecting to fire at every bird they saw were told in plain terms that it was not allowed. Lovely chaffinches, blackbirds, thrushes, along with others well-known to our host, thronged around the windows until hunger was appeased; but no sparrows turned up. On noticing this fact to our host he told me there were none, and though my friend Mr. Sutton had brought several pairs of this sociable species to St. Mary's Loch, up to that time they had not succeeded in retaining them. The reason for this peculiarity is not very clear, because though stacks of corn are far from numerous, yet each sheep-farm has its plot of grain.

On one of my journeys north I found myself in company with a stout gentleman whose waistcoat was enchained with gold and whose fingers glistened with brilliants; also with a well-dressed mechanic. We did not go far before conversation began, in the course of which the stout gentleman told us he had been under Barnum in America for three years. On this the other opened his mouth and asked which of the States he had travelled through, the Scotchman, for so he proved to be, stating that he had worked for some years in America. After comparing notes they went on to give their opinions of America and her institutions. The Scotchman spoke highly of the American system of education, which, though free, was most efficiently carried on, teaching the youths from their first lesson in reading through the advanced stages up to the Collegiate institutions. He also gave me

the impression that amongst the American youths an *esprit de corps* existed anent education. His experience was that the atmosphere in some of the States was much more conducive to the development of mental and bodily exertion than that of the old country. In one thing they both agreed that there was plenty of money to be made in America with hard work, laying great emphasis on "hard." I felt sorry for the Scotchman ere we parted; he had brought a large framed picture safely across the Atlantic, and was tending it carefully in the carriage, hoping doubtless to bestow it on his mother as a token of his affection, which never failed during his long absence, when unfortunately he leaned against it and crack went the glass.

As our spring time had proved so winterly, in June a party was arranged for St. Mary's, of whom I formed one. During our ride from Beattock instead of snow we had torrents of rain. However, on the following morning the sun shone brightly, and we had the pleasure of beholding the country in its dress of emerald green, and it being Sunday our host, Robert Laidlaw, Miss Sutton, and myself set out for Ettrick Kirk. How beautiful all looked. The trees in the valley of Ettrick were just bursting into full leaf and the spring flowers told us that the winter had passed. Monday came and with it "fresh weather." Ah, but too "fresh" for our piscatorial operations. No boat could live on the loch, so we tried the sheltered portions from the edge and were not unsuccessful. On Wednesday I walked three miles up the Meggat, and in fishing down got four dozen. Either that valley must have been sheltered with wood or the climate warmer when the Scottish Kings frequented it as a hunting forest, otherwise the pleasure cannot have been great. It is rarely free from either cold winds, rattling showers, or heavy snow, and yet as I have before stated the remains of a royal hunting lodge are still extant.

The lower portion of the Meggat is immortalised by that renowned and accomplished gentleman angler, the late Thomas Tod Stodhart, of Kelso, as abounding in trout. He says :—"At the foot of the Meggat, close to where it enters the loch, on the occasion of a flood I killed with the fly three panniers full of trout, each containing a stone weight and upwards in the course of a day." Adding :—"Another large capture made by me on this stream took place while in company with the Ettrick Shepherd, and the creelfuls we respectively emptied out on arriving at Henderlands, (we had fished down during a small flood from the head of Winterhope Burn, a course of four or five miles) would have astonished even a Tweedside adept." On reading these truthful accounts we need not be surprised at Professor Wilson in his "Noctes" making Hogg to say in reply to one of the Professors feats—"Poo ! That was nae day's fishing ava' man, in comparison to ane of mine on St. Mary's Loch, to say naething about the countless sma' anes, twa hunder about half a pun and a hunder about a haill pun." We all allow the last description to savour of the marvellous; at the same time truth shines through the froth. St. Mary's Loch and the rivers running into it abounded in fish so that fifty years ago the success of which Stodhart speaks need not astonish us. Whilst relating the foregoing I have been reminded of a conversation I had lately with a friend of mine, an excellent angler, on the productiveness of a carefully preserved loch. He instanced Loch Leven which from being almost useless to the angler has now become one of the most productive lochs as regards the quantity of trout to be found in Europe. He also said that after protecting the breeding fish and the fry, finding some of the smaller streams becoming so much diminished in volume during dry weather as to cause destruction to the fry, they had placed gratings at the mouths of such streams which prevented the fish running up them.

When we see our lakes and rivers becoming barren and ceasing to afford either sport or profit we ought to ascertain the cause and apply a remedy. Fair fishing will not injure any lake or river if the breeding fish and their fry are protected from wholesale destruction. Alas, the beginning of October is selected by many anglers in Scotland as the favourable time for stocking their creels with good sized trout which they then find swarming in the upper waters, taking the worm greedily. Fortunately on this side of the border the close time for trout commences on October 2nd. Many attempts have been made to alter this to November 1st, but I am glad to say hitherto they have failed, and as an October close time is essential to and forms the basis on which all the preservation of trout can be efficiently promoted I hope ere long our utilitarian and far seeing northern brethren will adopt successful measures to keep their beautiful lochs and noble rivers well stored with *salmo fario.* Whilst penning my experiences in which disappointments are recorded, let not my readers imagine that the sole enjoyment of such excursions depends on success in angling. I allow that good fishing and well filled baskets impart a zest to the spirits, but that is a transient pleasure compared with the delight of contemplating lovely scenery, yes it is a happiness to be able to join heartily with the Poet when he says

. . . . . .

This lovely mountain side,
In faintest purple dyed
And golden gray,
Will live in vision still
When nerves forget to thrill,
When hands have lost the skill
To play and slay.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

XIII.

Walk to the Hart's-leap — Altrive and Mount Benger — Remains of a Hamlet near Cross Cleuch — Description of the Country and Inhabitants in the 17th Century — The Covenanters — How Mass John was Shot — Traditionary Account of the Raid of James the Vth on Tushielaw and Henderland, with the Description of the Röad taken by the King — Verse of an Old Ballad — Snow Storms and Floods in Former Years — Glen Gaber — Beautiful Walk.

PRIOR to leaving St. Mary's Loch I feel inclined at the risk of wearying my readers to give further details respecting this interesting locality. On Wednesday, 19th September, 1883, being there on a visit, I set off with my host, Mr. Richardson, up the Ettrick road. The morning was fine, but the distant views, on account of the atmosphere being somewhat misty, were not very clear. After ascending for two miles we reached the highest elevation, about 1,500 feet above sea level, from which we could see the Roman road which runs through Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, Peebles, and so on, to the Firth of Clyde. It is of a good width, and for centuries was the great highway through that part of the country. As in other places in Britain, that wonderful people carried their roads over the tops of the hills, so avoiding as much as possible morasses and dense forests. As we descended towards the Ettrick valley we passed on our right Fa-law, (pronounced Faw-law,) a hill with steep grassy slopes, on the top of this hill is a peat bog—according to tradition a shepherd who had committed suicide was taken up this hill to be interred before sunrise, in the boundaries of two landed proprietors, as according to Scotch usage such body could only be interred in that way, half in the soil of

one owner and half in that of another. Ere those who carried the remains were able to reach the intended situation the sun gave symptoms of appearing, so the body was hastily laid in the peat bog. It so happened that at a sheep-clipping at Berry Bush, a sheep farm at the foot of the east slope of Fa-law, about sixty years ago, a number of young men, when their labours were completed, agreed to go and test the truth of the tradition. On arriving at the place which was indicated by a mark they succeeded in finding the body which had been buried in the clothes and Scotch bonnet worn by the man, and wrapped round with his plaid. All was in considerable preservation, so that they lifted up the body with the plaid and found in the neuk of the garment the shoe which he had been in the act of mending, and the small but strong cord with which he had ended his life.

Descending for a short distance we reached the road from Yarrow valley to Ettrick, down which towards the former we went. To our left was Altrive Lake, where James Hogg died in 1835, and in the distance right before us across the Yarrow was Mount Benger, Hogg's previous residence. As my object was to see the Hart's-leap, and as Mr. Richardson knew it was not far from our position we made our way to a shepherd's house, the only habitation visible, and finding him at dinner he kindly took us to the place, about 300 yards along an old turnpike road to Ettrick, but now a bad cart road. Two stones mark the distance which the last hart in the forest of Ettrick leaped, on being shot by Andrew Telfer, the huntsman to James the VI. — twenty-seven feet on a slight incline. The walk there from St. Mary's Cottage, a distance of four miles, will repay the tourist, especially if the day is favourable. The surroundings of St. Mary's strike some of the visitors as partaking of loneliness. In former times it was otherwise. At Cross Cleugh near the foot of the Loch of the Lowes, are the remains of a clachan or small hamlet, and various domestic articles have been

found when the ground on which it stood has been disturbed. A similar cluster of dwellings existed near Rodonna Cottage a quarter of a mile down St. Mary's Loch. Thirty-four dwellings occupied a portion of ground at Henderland ; and at Dryhope, not far from the foot of the loch a community was established. Up the valley of the Meggat a considerable population lived. Flax was grown by many, and a well in a field adjoining St. Mary's Cottage still shews where it underwent the first process, that of steeping. Spinning that and wool afforded occupation indoors, but we are somewhat in the dark as to how they provided themselves with food. Some corn would be grown, but the ripening of it was precarious.

When salmon and large trout ascended the rivers in the autumn a number would be speared and salted for winter use, and as the art of angling was rude there were always plenty of breeding fish left to propagate a numerous brood, which were allowed to increase in size unmolested by any youthful tyro, armed as in the present day with Stewart's worm tackle and small flies of every description. The deer in the forest on the border of which they dwelt would be carefully guarded ; at the same time it is probable that they enjoyed some privileges from the Abbot of Melrose, who held the suzerainty over the whole of Ettrick. This district, like many others, was severely visited by the plague, and it is thought by some that a large proportion of the dwellings were made tenantless and finally went to decay. History and tradition tell us of stirring events in the district of St. Mary's, or more properly in the forest of Ettrick, in whose large area St. Mary's was included. The Covenanters, as previously stated, sought the neighbouring linns and recesses in order therein to worship God according to their consciences. To their astonishment these secret meetings were visited by the troops of Claverhouse, and the Covenanters felt convinced that they were betrayed. Some of their number

had noticed a mysterious looking woman occasionally going by Chapelhope and so across the hills towards Dumfries-shire, and their suspicions being aroused this individual was stopped, and on being threatened confessed to being the bearer of despatches from John Brenner, usually called Mass John (who lived in the manse at St. Mary's Kirk), to Grierson in Dumfries-shire, giving all particulars as to the proceedings of the Covenanters, upon which some of that persecuted body marched to the kirk and shot Mass John through the window of his manse — decision was then the order of the day.

Tradition relates that when King James arrived at Henderland Castle, Perys — or, as it is now written, Percy — Cockburn was at breakfast. On being summoned, he declined to attend, upon which the King sent a message that the "Guid man o' 'Bellengaich'" wanted to see him. On hearing this the knife and fork dropped out of his hand, and his retainers being absent he was, as I before stated, hung over the Castle gate. The King then marched along the King's road between the lochs to Tushielaw, where Adam Scott, styled the "King of the Thieves," after a desperate resistance, was put to death. Now "Bellengaich" signifies windy pass, and is situate near Stirling, but beyond the fact that the King had been in the habit of going about in disguise there is nothing to show the reason of the striking inference drawn by the unfortunate Cockburn. The road by which the King went is also clearly pointed out by a verse in an old Scottish ballad, and though it may not refer to that special march, still the way is distinctly shown, and all the names are now used along the track :—

> The King rade roun the Meercleuch head
> Bootit and spur'd as we a' did see.
> And din'd wi' a Lass at Mosfennan Yett,
> A wee aneath the Logan Lee.

The account of this raid differs from the one given in

Reminiscences No. 6, where it relates how Cockburn was surprised at his dinner after King James had been at Tushielaw. The discrepancy in the two statements is immaterial, as they both agree in the important facts. On the whole I incline to accept that handed down by tradition. The road along the margin of the loch is of comparatively recent construction. After the revolution of 1688, as the population had decreased about the loch, a new kirk was erected at Yarrow, seven miles from that of St. Mary's, the building of which, along with that of the manse, fell to decay as the endowment was appropriated to that of Yarrow, it being made the kirk of the district. Dobbs Linn, the weird-looking ravine not far from the "Grey Mare's Tail," was so named on account of a Covenanter named Dobson having, along with another member of that harassed section of the Christian Church, taken up his abode there. Storms of wind and snow are severe, and according to Hogg, tradition has handed down scenes and pictures of the extraordinary storm of 1620, which, for desolation and horror, baffles description. When Hogg wrote in the early part of the present century, he tells us that this storm was marked on the traditionary records in vivid characters. He says it was called "The thirteen drifty days." "For thirteen days and nights the snow drift never abated. The ground was covered with frozen snow when it commenced, and during the whole time the sheep never broke their fast. The young sheep began about the fifth day to be sleepy and torpid, and all so affected died during the night. About the ninth and tenth days the shepherds began to build semicircular walls of the dead in order to protect the living." . . . . "When the fourteenth day arrived, there was not on many a high-lying farm a living sheep to be seen. Large mis-shapen walls of the dead surrounding a small prostrate flock, likewise all dead and frozen, were all that remained to cheer the forlorn shepherd and his master." Nine-tenths of all the

sheep in the south of Scotland were destroyed, and in one instance, viz., the farm of Phaup, the land remained unoccupied for twenty years, though letting, when Hogg wrote, for 500*l.* yearly.

Passing over the storms of 1709, 1740, and 1742, I will give a few particulars of that of 1794, when Hogg was a shepherd. Between Crawford Muir and the Border which embraces the district about which I am writing, he says no storm can be compared to that of January 24, 1794. "Within the bounds described, seventeen shepherds perished, and upwards of thirty were carried home insensible, who afterwards recovered, but the number of sheep lost baffled calculation. Whole flocks were overwhelmed with snow." Farmers lost from thirty to seventy score a-piece. I myself (Hogg says) "witnessed twelve score of excellent ewes all lying dead with their heads one way as if a flock of sheep had dropped dead going from the washing." "In the Solway Frith there is a place called the Beds of Esk, where the tide throws out and leaves whatever is carried down by the rivers. When the flood after the storm had subsided, there lay on those and the adjacent banks, 1,840 sheep, nine black cattle, three horses, two men, one woman, forty-five dogs, and one hundred and eighty hares, besides smaller animals." A shepherd returning home during a storm got upon a drift of snow, which was partially arched over a "linn," or ravine, not far from Bowerhope. This gave way, and down he went, the mass of snow falling upon him. His dog going home alone roused the fears of the family, and they enlisted the aid of a neighbouring shepherd whose dog scented the man, and with great exertion he was rescued alive but unconscious.

About the 15th of September, 1878, a fierce storm of wind arose from the north-west which carried away entirely thirty-five pikes of hay, each containing forty stone, from a meadow at Chapelhope. They used every means to save it,

but to no purpose. Away it went, and the strange part of the story is, they could find no traces of it after, though they watched the disaster.

On Sunday, the 16th inst., I went across from St. Mary's Cottage, accompanied by one of my sons and Robert Laidlaw, to Ettrick. We had a lovely walk, and on arriving at the kirk we saw Lord Napier stooping over his mother's grave, where he was arranging some flowers. Lady Napier assisted him.

When the service was over I went with his lordship and the minister, the Rev. Mr. Falconer, to inspect an epitaph on a tombstone over the grave of a shepherd who died in 1831. Now as this man perished in the snow whilst caring for his flock, Lord Napier thought the cause of his death should be inscribed on the stone, along with a suitable text which he requested the Minister to aid him in selecting. The following Sunday I found that a mason from Hawick had been employed to fulfil his lordship's wishes, and the text on the stone was, "The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

Thursday having been wet, Mr. Richardson thought he would have a day's fishing for the first time this year, so on Friday morning we started, my host with his 18 feet rod. The day was cloudy with occasional showers, but near Meggat Bridge we met Mr. McAllister, the highly respected precentor and schoolmaster, who had promised to accompany me up Glen Gaber, whilst Mr. Richardson pursued his way down the loch to Kirkstead Burn. The fish were more inclined for the fly than the worm. The trout up Glen Gaber are beautiful and of fair size; twenty with the fly by my companion, and ten with the worm and fly by me, were the result, in weight six pounds. Mr. Richardson was disappointed in the size of his capture, the burn having been continuously fished with every appliance by workmen employed on repairs to a building.

On looking out the following morning the air was balmy, and all around rejoiced in the prospect of a fine day, so after breakfast I set off again to go up the Meggat and Glen Gaber in order to view the locality under brighter influences than existed on the previous day. Taking half a scone in my pocket and shouldering my rod I set off. The scene up the Lowes with Riskinhope with its back ground of dark pines under the hillside was resplendent in the morning sun. Turning from the bridge the statue of Hogg, seated with his shepherd staff and dog, reminded me of his words — "Oft had he seen as morning rose," &c.—for St. Mary's Loch lay before me with scarcely a ripple, the opposite hill with its varied autumn tints reflected in the clear blue water. On nearing Meggat Bridge the picture was a glorious one, across the foot of the Meggat valley was the Capper with its precipitous sides streaked with the dark purple and sober grey relieved with the golden tints of the bracken. At its foot stood partially shaded by trees the Free Kirk, School, and Schoolmaster's House, with the little cottage through which the postal business of the district passes. A little to my left was the farm house of Henderland just peeping out from amongst the trees all so bright and peaceful, even the smoke rose out of the "Lums" and ascended in the air free from any disturbance. Down the loch the views were equally charming. Bowerhope nestling among the trees under Bowerhope Law, and at the foot of the loch were the distant hills behind which the Tweed runs.

After standing for some time imagination wandered back to bygone days when the grey battlements of Cockburn's castle at Henderland, surmounted by his banner and surrounded by the cottages of his retainers were conspicuous, and further down the loch on the hill side where St. Mary's Kirk stood with its modest dwelling for the priest, sending forth its melodious call for the good people to assemble at prayer. I proceeded up the side of the Meggat, and whilst

crossing a wooden bridge looked up the valley which lay before me. On the left was Syart Law, a conical hill from the top of which the view is grand. It has been suggested that formerly ladies ascended this lofty hill in order to witness the Royal party chasing the deer, and so it was called Seehart now corrupted into Syhart but as most of the names in that district are Gaelic I think we may conclude the present nomenclature is derived from the latter source. A few shepherd's cottages dot the valley of the Meggat. After leaving Henderland there is almost no cultivated land until you reach Cramelt, near which is a farm that has been occupied by the same family for nearly two centuries, and probably some corn may be occasionally grown there. Sheep pasture on the hills, and what little hay of a very coarse kind they get from enclosures and from fertile patches on the mountain side is used to support the shepherd's cow during the winter and to keep the sheep alive through a snow storm or an inclement spring. I did not go up so far as Cramelt, as I turned to fish back when within two miles of it, but I could see it distinctly. Cramelt, I understand, is Gaelic for crooked, and the burn being very crooked gives its name to the bold precipitous hill so conspicuous at the head of the Meggat valley called Cramelt Craig and not Camel Craig as I have previously designated it.

After trying the Meggat for a short time with indifferent success I betook myself to Glen Gaber, another name of Gaelic origin. I went some distance up this romantic glen. There is a nice stream of water, which, as it winds about, tumbles over rocks in cascades or murmurs along a pebbly bottom, occasionally taking gentle leaps. Here the trout seem to thrive, and are beautiful in colour and of excellent flavour. Any one following the course of the stream on a fine day may have a charming mountain walk of some miles. Mr. Mitchell, the highly respected and esteemed occupier of Henderland, was born in a cottage about a mile up the

burn, approached only by a bridle road, the site but not the ruins are visible. I could dwell longer on scenes interesting to myself, but I must now leave St. Mary's Loch with all its beauties, traditions, and kind inhabitants, hoping that those amongst my readers who are tempted to go and see for themselves may derive as much pleasure from a visit as the writer of these reminiscences.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

XIV.

New Abbey — Light Baskets — Beautiful Scenery — Haaf-net Fishers — Heavy Rain — Parting with my Dear Friends — Successful Day — Globe Inn — Poet Burns.

HAVING arranged with my friends at Scotby to accompany them to New Abbey in June, 1878, I left Hawesmead soon after 3 a.m. on Monday, the 10th of that month, for Oxenholme Station. The morning was fine and the air fresh and cheering. The birds were chanting their morning songs, even the trees and flowers seemed to rejoice. On the station were a few others who, like myself, had chosen the early dawn in which to commence their holiday, for it was Whitsuntide. We all agreed in thinking to be out in the country by sunrise, in June, well rewarded the exertion. Soon the train stopped, and in I got, reaching Dumfries before seven, where I breakfasted, shortly after which my friends arrived at the station, and we all seated ourselves in a carriage for New Abbey. As Criffel came in nearer view our ardour increased, and when we crossed the stream on entering the village we both felt anxious to be at work. Stopping at the hotel, kept by Mr. and Mrs. Ford, we alighted, and after a slight refreshment proceeded to Loch Kinder, where boat and boatman awaited us. Putting our rods together did not take long, and we scrambled over the cobbles of Whinstone, round and slippery, placed for a landing pier, and which I never went along without feeling an unpleasant uncertainty as to whether I should accomplish

the passage minus a ducking—but none of us ever had that misfortune, though it was an awkward spot. Robert King, an experienced fisher, managed the boat, I sat in the bow and my friend occupied, along with Mrs. Sutton, who aided in making up a fresh cast or amused herself with crochet work, the after part.

The day was pleasant, with heavy clouds hanging about, and we fished with earnestness, but the trout were not in the humour. At two o'clock we repaired to the boathouse, where a capital spread was ready, to which we addressed ourselves, hoping when we had allayed our hunger the trout would be on the feed. The last course being finished, and the remains of our banquet, along with the plates, which latter were always washed in the loch, had been safely deposited in the hamper, we lit our pipes, and with renewed hope and energy again commenced fishing. This time we tried that portion of the loch which is shallower and partially covered with flags, amongst which many a fine trout lurks. Now and then a noble fellow turned up, and after letting us feel a slight pull returned to his lair. Flies were changed, other water tried, but wherever we went the same process was adopted by the fish, and we rarely made a cast without a futile rise. In this way the afternoon wore apace. It was enjoyable notwithstanding. The foliage of the trees on the western side of the loch at the base of Criffel was luxuriant and beautiful, and the oaks scattered over the enclosure to the south, with their young leaves of various tints radiant under the gleams of the sun added a charm to the picture. Then silence, broken only by the ripple of the waves against the boat, the flapping of the wings of an occasional gannet as it returned from the Solway laden with fish in its pouch and throat for the young in its nest on the precipitous sides of Criffel, along with the songs of birds or the bleating of a lamb, reigned around us. We returned to our quarters with light baskets along a lovely path, and in

due time were seated at the tea table, bountifully supplied by Mrs. Ford. On inquiring during the evening of Mr. Caird, a thriving provision dealer, who is also a fisher with a net which I will shortly describe, if any salmon had been taken that day, he told us some of the men had been successful.

The Abbot of Sweet Heart Abbey, to which I alluded in Reminiscences No. VII., was possessed of rights over the adjoining country, and in consequence the game, fish, water power, and other easements belonged to him. I cannot, without obtaining leave to search into the old deeds, &c., lay before my readers the extent to which those rights are now vested in the noble proprietor of the lovely ruins, but I can speak of such as are commonly known by the public. For a certain distance along the shore where the Nith falls into the Solway, the owner of the Abbey has the fishery, which is let to such of the inhabitants of the district as wish to pursue the occupation, at a small, almost nominal, rental for each net. This net, as I described in "Part V. of Salmonidæ," is 14 feet long, 4 feet deep, and stretched on a light frame, and is called a haaf-net. At the commencement of the season the applicants, who, I understand, number upwards of fifty, draw lots for their stations on the sand. When this is arranged, each goes when he pleases to his allotted ground. The fisherman is accoutred in thick woollen trousers and shirt, and attached to his right wrist, by a string, is a wooden mallet; round his loins is wound a thick blanket. Thus donned, he proceeds to his ground, and holding the net upright before him, the three or four supports of which being pointed, enabling him to keep it steady, he awaits the flow of the tide. Thus the men stand each in his allotted place, the tide coming up to their breasts. On the ebb they reverse their position in order to face the stream. From three to four hours they thus stand, and occasionally you may see as many as forty patiently

waiting for salmon to strike their nets. I have never heard of any of those so employed being afflicted with rheumatism, or other ailment, in consequence. In "Leaves from an Angler's Note Book" will be found a description of the way in which this net is manipulated when a fish is entrapped.

As I had to attend a meeting in Carlisle the following day, I set off soon after five o'clock next morning to catch the train at Dumfries. Whilst engaged at the committee, the black clouds I noticed when on the loch had massed together, and the rain descended in torrents. I thought of my friends at New Abbey, hoping they would not be caught in the storm. The business for which I went to Carlisle being completed, I returned to Dumfries, and then to New Abbey, where I arrived at five o'clock, thinking that as the rain was over we might have a nice evening's fishing on the loch. Alas, I found Mr. Sutton disinclined to go out, as during the day he was caught in the storm, which completely drenched him. I went alone, but the wind fell, and I returned with two or three only; one, however, was a beauty.

The next morning we set to work, feeling certain of good sport after the rain. But it was otherwise, and we had to content ourselves with a fine day, lovely scenery, and friendly intercourse. Lunch in the boathouse as before, then my friends, who had an engagement the following day, bid me good-bye. Ah! I watched them from the boat as the carriage slowly ascended the rough way at the head of the loch, and we waved our handkerchiefs till out of sight. Little did I imagine that we should never meet on Loch Kinder again. I felt lonely, but I parted with my dear friend under the hope of again enjoying his society in that charming spot. It has pleased God to order it otherwise, and the scene of our adieus at Loch Kinder will ever remain vividly on my heart and mind. No particular sport was

experienced during the afternoon. Hope was not extinct, and on turning out next day the south-east wind blew kindly, and Robert King spoke encouragingly, so once more I embarked on the loch, and very soon found the trout were open to offers. By four o'clock in the afternoon twelve pounds lay in my pannier, Robert King having given, when opportunity offered, an occasional cast with my extra rod. Whilst waiting for a carriage early one morning in Dumfries, I thought I should like to see the Globe Inn, at which the Poet Burns spent his last evening in that town, and accosting three men walking arm in arm, one of them replied that he "would show me the Globe," intimating that he had been on the "spree," and hoped I would give him a gill. I told him whisky was not in my line, that I was a total abstainer. "So was I," said he, "for twelve months, and would have been so now if some freens from America had not called upon me last week. But if you'll gie me a gill it will just put me right, and I'll away to my work." Taking me a short distance from the Commercial Hotel, and turning up a very narrow street on our left, he said, "There's the Globe." The street was only seven feet wide, the house three stories with narrow sash windows having remarkably small panes; altogether the Globe Inn looked anything but inviting, and it struck me very decidedly that poetical inspiration is not dependent on locality. My guide said, "Won't you go in and sit in Burns' chair? they only charge a shilling for it." I thought under the circumstances, especially the craving for a gill on the part of my attendant, that it was better to be satisfied with the outside, so handing my guide a package of tobacco I bid him good morning and wended my way back to the Commercial Hotel, meditating on the closing epoch of the life of him who, notwithstanding all his faults, was one of the greatest of poets. That beautiful prayer of his for the family of "his host and hostess in lines left at the house of a rev.

friend where he had passed the previous night," concluding with the following touching stanza, has often come into my remembrance : —

That soon or late whene'er they part
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
That they may meet no wanderer lost
A family in heaven.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

XV.

[CONCLUDING ARTICLE.]

Mrs. Caird — "Coming through the Rye" — Caerlaverock Castle — Barons and Knights at the Siege in 1300 — My Friend's Silver Match Box Found — Covenanters Tied to Stakes in the Tidal Way of the Solway — Auldgirth Salmon Leaping under our Rods and Refusing to be Caught — W. G. Best's Invitation — Amusing Incident — Remarkable Preservation.

On leaving Loch Kinder, at the close of the day's fishing described in my last chapter, I made my way back to the hotel, ready for the bountiful tea always supplied by Mrs. Ford, which was discussed with an appetite the result of exertion and success. In the evening I went to call on some of my friends in New Abbey. I found Mrs. Caird, though over eighty, enjoying fair health, and possessing remarkable vigour of mind. Having been, on one of my previous visits there, accommodated with a bed, we soon got into conversation, in the course of which she told me how one of her grandsons had succeeded as an engineer in America, being considered very clever in erecting suspension bridges, and I was struck with the result of Scottish education combined with industry and perseverance. New Abbey being in the adjoining county to Ayr, reminds me of the strong opinion held by one well-informed and talented Scotch gentleman respecting Burns's song, "Coming through the Rye." At Dalrye, in the latter county, a stream called the

Rye crosses the road over which there was no bridge, and in consequence those who had regard to dry clothes in stepping through, held them out of harm's way, and "Coming through the Rye," described crossing this stream. I have not seen it, but this explanation seems equally as probable as the hitherto universally accepted inference that a field of rye was the author's picture.

The Castle of Caerlaverock, on the northern shore of the Solway, situated at the confluence of the Nith and Locher, is within a few miles of New Abbey, yet though the distance is greater from Dumfries, the tourist may find it more convenient of approach from the latter place.

The first Castle of Caerlaverock, the history of which until the siege I am about to speak of, is little known, was an unimportant place. From an early period it was the seat of the Maxwells. However insignificant it may have been, for one chronicler designates it "a poor hamlet," Edward the I., after having summoned by writs dated December 29th, 1299, all who owed military service to the Crown to meet him at Carlisle on the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist next ensuing (the 24th June) in order to invade Scotland, found Caerlaverock Castle fortified and garrisoned ready to dispute his progress. His army, therefore, encamped before it early in July, and we are indebted to this event for a circumstantial list of all the Princes, Barons, and Knights, who were there present. The document is written in old French, upon vellum, and was composed by one of the heralds accompanying the King. The style is metrical, as my readers will see by the following quotation :—

Guillemes de Leybourne ausi
Vaillans homs, sanz mès et sans si,
Baniere i ot o larges pans,
De inde, o sis blans lyouns rampans.

Perhaps I may, without offending some of my learned friends, give the translation by Thomas Wright, Esq., M.A., &c. :—

> Also William de Leybourne,
> A valiant man without but and without if,
> Had there a banner with a large pennon
> Of blue, with six white lions rampant.

The celebrated Robert de Clifford was also present, to whom the castle, on its surrender, was entrusted by the King. This renowned nobleman fell in the battle of Bannockburn, June 25, 1314, at the early age of forty. He made a great impression on the King's Herald, the author of the Roll of Caerlaverock, the earliest roll of arms extant in England, for, after speaking in high terms of his virtues and bravery, he concludes thus (translation) :—

> For he exhibits as good proofs
> Of wisdom and prudence as any I see
> The King his good lord knows
> His much honoured banner
> Chequered with gold and azure
> With a vermillion fess.
> If I were a young maiden
> I would give him my heart and person,
> So good is his fame.

After accurately delineating the "Arms" borne by one hundred and five noble personages, and giving a personal and characteristic description of ninety-eight of the individuals, the author proceeds to lay down a clear and succinct detail of the castle, its situation and defences, after which follows the plan of attack, by the reading thereof we ascertain clearly the various proceedings of a siege at that period. The castle, after hard fighting on both sides, surrendered on the second day. In 1312, Eustace de Maxwell, who had supported the English, joined the standard of Robert Bruce and defended Caerlaverock for several weeks against the English. Foreseeing that it must fall into their hands, he

demolished the fortifications, for which patriotic sacrifice he was awarded a pension by Bruce. Herbert Maxwell, son of Eustace, in 1347, swore fealty to the English, and Caerlaverock appears to have been rebuilt. In 1355 the Scots took it, levelling it to the ground, carrying out that trait so conspicuous in their national character of whatever they undertake, doing it thoroughly. The present castle was built about the end of the 14th century, and, according to Camden, was much injured in the invasion by the Earl of Sussex. The Earl of Nithsdale fortified it in 1638 on the eve of the Civil Wars, and it was obstinately defended by that nobleman for the King until 1640, when he surrendered it and then Caerlaverock was finally dismantled.

Whilst on Loch Kinder the first day during the visit to which I have alluded, Mr. Sutton lost his silver matchbox. We sought for it and made inquiries in the village to no purpose. It was one he had carried about with him for many years, and he regretted its disappearance. Three weeks after he again visited New Abbey, and was agreeably surprised and gratified by Robert King presenting the lost box to him. It appears that King, when in the boathouse, saw something shining amongst the weeds at the entrance, and on fishing the object out of the water Mr. Sutton's lost box turned up. Rod fishing on Loch Kinder begins on May 15th and closes on July 15th.

The counties of Dumfries and Kircudbright, in which latter the village of New Abbey is situate, played an important part in the history of the Covenanters. It was on the sands of the Frith of Cree that Douglas, a coadjutor with Grierson of Lag, Johnstone, and Clavers, in that bloody persecution, ordered two stakes to be fixed within the tidal flood mark, to which Janet Smith and her granddaughter, Nanny Nivinson, who was an orphan, were respectively tied — the young woman stripped to the waist, the grandmother infirm and scarcely able to hold up her head. The young

woman's brother having been proscribed by the persecuting party, went to sea. Unfortunately the vessel was wrecked on the Isle of Arran, and he made his way back to his sister's home. Although he only stayed there a few hours, yet information went to Douglas at Wigton, and at daybreak the old woman's hut was surrounded by soldiers expecting to find the young man. Being disappointed, they wreaked their vengeance on the two females, and because they would not divulge his whereabouts Douglas ordered them to be tied to the stakes, expecting that as the tide rose they would reveal the place of concealment of their relative. A guard of dragoons surrounded the spot and an officer of rank kept riding every now and then into the rising flood to question them. But they never yielded, and repeating the following words—"For anything that man can do I shall not be afraid," the grandmother bowed her head and resigned her spirit to God. Youth and strength sustained life much longer in the youthful martyr. Her beauty and sufferings excited the pity of one of the dragoons who tried to save her by calling out to the officer "She has told where her brother is to be found," on which Douglas exclaimed "Has she told?" Her reply was firm and decisive: "No, never. No, never, never." And she at length succumbed to the waves. Grierson, of Lag, did not hesitate to use his pistol when vexed with any one, however innocent, who declined to betray a friend.

Passing over these sad traditions, the tourist will find in that portion of the West of Scotland much that is beautiful. The scenery, varied by mountain and glen interspersed with romantic lochs well stocked with trout, as well as by hill and dale fertile and well wooded, bounded by the sea with its picturesque inlets once the safe retreat of the smuggler, and in whose recesses many a chest of tea and cask of French brandy were secreted until a favourable opportunity arrived for removal, will impart constant interest and pleasure to the

painter, the geologist, or the angler. In the present day every remarkable event, either public or private, is immediately detailed in print instead of being carefully stored in the minds of those who are gifted with retentive memories, and from time to time recited by them during winter evenings around the blazing hearth. Yet the lover of tradition may still be gratified in that part of the country by hearing the recital of ancient histories and ballads recounting the doings of past generations.

In September, 1879, I spent with my young friend, J. Walker Sutton, a day at Auldgirth, an ancient hostelry on the banks of the Nith, eight miles from Dumfries, and where the coaches in olden days stopped to change horses. Having obtained leave from the owner of that portion of the river we put up our salmon rods and went to work. The water was in nice order and our expectations were great, especially as both salmon and sea trout were on the move. To our dismay we found the fish were in no humour either for the fly or minnow. Their great pleasure seemed to be in tumbling about, leaping over our lines, and now and then startling us with a tremendous somersault just under the top of the rod, causing a loud splash. Grievous as it was to see them so near, and yet never to have one chance, it could not be helped, and we had this consolation that others, and amongst them one or two local crack anglers, were similarly treated. So after admiring the extreme beauty of the place and the splendid trees with which the park-like fields were dotted we refreshed ourselves with an excellent tea and returned, hoping our next visit would be more successful.

Before concluding this series of reminiscences I will for a few moments take my readers back to the Lune and commence with a copy of a portion of a letter sent to me by my old friend, W. G. Best, dated Howgill Mill, 4th month, 12, 1857. I will give it as in the original. After expressing a

strong desire that I would come, he says — "I went out a little on 6th day and caught 23, and I went out a little yesterday and I caught 23. I did not wade either day. I got two at a time, the largest I ever saw on my line at once. I was standing on a rock at Hole Ford and I got hold of a fine fish with the middle fly, and when I had got it near the net there came another quite as big as the first, and took the tail fly. I never before in my fishing life saw anything like it before. I had nothing on but single hair, and on a rock where I could not stir, and away they went coupled together like two greyhounds. I never thought but I should be broken; but I began to pull in and I got them both, and I never saw two as fine trout in my net before. They weighed 11½oz. each. Please to write on 3rd day and say if thou can come." On the receipt of this what could I do but accept the invitation, especially as owing to an accident the previous spring I was advised to take occasional relaxation, but I did not surpass the exploit of my friend, though twice have I landed with single hair two fully grown trout at the same time, namely, in 1872 when fishing on the Rothay in a swiftly running stream a short distance above the Ingleton railway bridge I caught two at once, weighing 4oz. and 10½oz. respectively. The following year on the Lune, at Corney Wood Nook, near Fleetholme, I caught two in a similar manner, weighing 4½oz. and 12oz. respectively.

This locality reminds me of the following anecdote—The late Anthony Wilkinson, of Hole House, was a large landowner in Howgill. He married a daughter of the Rev. John Sedgwick, to whom I have alluded. Mrs. Wilkinson was a very handsome woman, and her husband who was looked upon as the Squire of Howgill was very proud of her. One market day the Squire was returning from Sedbergh with one of his tenants. The prices of butter, wool, and wethers had been discussed and they were approaching their

homes, each beginning to think of what he had bought for his wife. Now the Squire's tenant, whom I shall call John, was blessed with an industrious, honest wife, but of a very ungainly appearance. "John," said the Squire, "you must allow that my Jane is a very handsome woman and that I ought to be proud of her." Using a prefix very common throughout the district at that day but which I shall omit, John exclaimed, ... "She's nout to my Mary."

Towards the close of one of our fishing days in Howgill I felt uncommonly hungry, and whilst taking our lines off at the high end of Dillicar Wood I said "William, has thou anything left in thy pocket, for I feel as if I could eat straws," upon which he emptied out of his pocket some crumbs of oatbread which I gladly transferred to my mouth. During the process of mastication I found now and then something hard which induced me to make an examination, when to my horror I turned out of my mouth a good sized fly hook. I never think of this narrow escape without thanking God for such a remarkable preservation.

Variety of scene frequently dots the path of the angler, contributing to his instruction as well as pleasure.

In the end of May, 1864, I went one afternoon to Bowness. When sunset arrived, accompanied by John Brockbank, I set off in a boat to troll for trout. The night was beautiful, not a ripple on the lake, and the air was balmy. Whilst resting on our oars, uncertain what to do, sweet music attracted our attention, and looking about we saw a boat with a party of ladies and gentlemen, who were engaged in singing. "For ever with the Lord," "We sing of the realms of the blest," and "Sun of my soul" were the hymns which filled the evening air with sweet melody. We listened with delight, and regretted when the last sounds died away that no more were then to follow. Trolling was commenced, the result being one pike instead of a trout. At three o'clock next morning we again tried our best, but

only one or two small char were taken ; the sun got too hot and the surface of the lake too glassy. After breakfast Mr. Brockbank speared a few eels.

The next year we were again together on Windermere one fine evening at the end of May, and were preparing our fishing tackle in the boat when our attention was arrested by the music of several voices from a boat a short distance from us. We listened, and to our surprise and pleasure, the same hymns which I described as having heard the previous year were sung beautifully. As the air was calm every word and note fell distinctly on our ears.

The following February, snow being on the ground, I went over to Howgill to see my old friend, W. G. Best, who had been poorly. Whilst sitting with him after dinner by the fire we heard the sounds of a fiddle ; we listened, and the tunes to which the hymns I have mentioned are usually sung were played by the performer. I went to the door and found an old man, to whom I gave a small sum. He immediately said, with tears in his eyes, " Thank you, sir. The weather has prevented me going about for a few days, and this morning I did not know where to bend my steps for a bit of bread, but God has led me here, and you have supplied my wants."

In now taking leave of my readers for the present I may say that writing these Reminiscences has been a pleasant task, and should the perusal have given entertainment to any of them I shall consider myself well repaid.

N.B.—" The Roll of Caerlaverock " is carefully preserved in the British Museum. The description of the situation of the castle given therein agrees closely with that of Ellangowan Castle, handed down by Sir Walter Scott in " Guy Mannering."

LEAVES FROM AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK.

Read before the Kendal Literary and Scientific Institution.

When asked by the Council of this Institution, through their excellent secretary, Mr. Severs, to read a paper with the above title, I felt gratified by the request, though from having contributed a series of 15 papers entitled "Angling Reminiscences" and 11 papers on the "Salmonidæ of Westmorland" within the last two years to the *Westmorland Gazette* I hesitated to engage in so responsible a work lest I should weary my hearers by recounting a twice told tale. Encouraged by the cheering influence of your secretary I ventured to consent. In the Reminiscences of which I have spoken, with the exception of dates I trusted to memory when I related incidents of which I was eye-witness or which were told to me by those who were the spectators, but who are long since gone to their last home. The present contribution is founded principally on Notes and Jottings made from time to time in no regular order as relates to the various characteristics of the species or events to which they refer, so I must ask my audience to be patient whilst they follow me along a track somewhat undefined in arrangement.

The subject even of Salmonidæ is a large one. The Angling Literature of Great Britain up to July, 1856, comprised 343 works besides 28 Nos. of "The Fisher's Garland." Since that time considerable additions have been made. Many are elegantly written with charming descriptions of scenery. In the 14th century the Italians wrote piscatory plays

which were interspersed with songs. In 1653 good old Isaac Walton wrote the book entitled "Walton's Angler" etc., which is the most popular treatise on the subject we possess. In that elegant work he says—"And first, I shall tell you what some have observed, and I have found it to be a real truth, that the very sitting by the river side, is not only the quietest and fittest place for contemplation, but will invite an angler to it." The various scenes to which the angler in the pursuit of his occupation is introduced afford food for reflection and leave beautiful pictures on the memory which are joys whilst life lasts.

Professor Wilson was a noted angler and in his Noctes occasionally introduces the subject. In 1825 he published "The Angler's Tent," a narrative of one day's journey among the mountains of Westmorland, Lancashire, and Cumberland. He says—

> Yes! dear to us that solitary trade,
> 'Mid vernal peace in peacefulness pursued
> Through rocky glen, wild moor, and hanging wood,
> White flowering meadow, and romantic glade!
> The sweetest visions of our boyish years
> Come to our spirits with a murmuring tone
> Of running waters,—and one stream appears,
> Remembered all, tree, willow, bank, and stone;
> How glad were we, when after sunny showers
> It's voice came to us issuing from the school!
> How fled the vacant, solitary hours,
> By dancing rivulet or silent pool!
> And still our souls retain in manhood's prime
> The love of joys our childish years that blest;
> So now encircled by these hills sublime,
> We anglers, wandering with a tranquil breast,
> Build in this happy vale a fairy bower of rest.

I could enlarge, but suffice it to say angling pursuits have abundant scope in them for the exercise of muscular power, intellectual pleasure and scientific research. With this preamble I will commence my paper.

LEAVES FROM AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK.

XVI.

Fishing up the Rothay —Straightening the course of a River prejudicial to the Increase of Fish — Ambleside Rushbearing — Rev. Owen Lloyd — Poet Wordsworth — Shear Tom — Power of Smell in Fishes and in Dogs — A Fishing Cat — Strong Maternal Instinct in a Hen.

BEING on a visit for a few days at Rothay Bank the residence of my late friends Mr. and Mrs. Crosfield, in July, 1842, I occupied one morning in fishing with the fly up the Rothay, commencing at Rothay Bridge. I thought, notwithstanding it was towards the end of July, that as the weather had been showery and the day was cloudy, I might be successful. It was my first trial up that stream, and I did not realise the fact that for a long distance its course had been straightened a few years previously. Where needful I waded and fished earnestly, but my efforts except in one or two spots were futile. Experience has since taught me that in general trout, though growing rapidly on fresh ground in ponds, do not appear to congregate quickly in those lengths of any river which have been cut for the purpose of making the course straight in order to avoid the flooding of low-lying land, or to accomplish some other object. The reasons are easily given. In the first place there is a scarcity of harbour, and in the next, trout always prefer positions in which they can rest, as well as be able to go at their pleasure and feed or enjoy themselves in the stream. Take any one of our rivers running through an

alluvial district in its natural course and we shall find it winding about, causing a deep pool here, often overshadowed by trees, under which many a fine trout resorts for shade in summer and frequently for insect food; and a gravelly bed there, over which the clear water purls and where trout often lie concealed under the boulders, or resort thereto in order to feed on the larvæ of various flies crawling amongst the gravel, or to watch the quick movement of insect life over the surface and ready to seize any which come within reach. Thus, alternations of pool, shallow, and rapid, are conducive to the growth of all our trout species. So straightening the courses of rivers and especially those of our mountain streams, and also the removal of boulders from them are adverse to the increase of nearly all migratory and non-migratory Salmonidæ.

On this 25th day of July was held the Ambleside Rushbearing, and to it I went on my return from fishing. In my note-book I find the following — "I got up at two o'clock and went on the lake for four hours before breakfast, after which I fished up to Glen Rothay and in the afternoon went to the Rushbearing held in a field belonging to the late Benson Harrison, Esq. The children sang a hymn composed for the occasion by the Rev. Owen Lloyd, who was then the Incumbent of Langdale, and whose epitaph commencing "By playful smiles, (alas! too oft a sad heart's sunshine)" written by Wordsworth, may be read on his tombstone under a yew tree, the spot indicated by himself in Langdale Churchyard. Underneath a large oak tree lay Wordsworth, waving a stick, which like some of his ideas could only have a charm to him from its simplicity and to others from being in his possession. He appeared well, and when I offered to assist him to rise, he jumped up exclaiming, "I have not lost all my youth yet."

Staying with my family at Ambleside in July, 1857, I met with a well-known character, Thomas Hartley, of Egremont,

otherwise known as "Shear Tom" because his trade was that of a knife grinder, and his occupation that of angler and general sharpener of razors, shears, knives, in fact, of every article of steel requiring a keen edge. He was a stalwart man. In his youth he had seen the evils resulting from drinking intoxicants and smoking tobacco, and was in consequence a zealous advocate of teetotalism, as well as an anti-tobacconist. These qualifications were combined with those of poet, psalm singer, and local preacher amongst the Primitive Methodists. He was an adept, not only in curing solmon roe, but in the use of it. The small experience I have had in fishing with that bait led me to suppose it could only be used effectually in a swollen, discoloured water, but I soon found from conversation with him how ignorant I was; and not many days after, my unwillingness to credit his statements was dissipated by actual facts. Walking over Pelter Bridge one evening with my wife I spied "Shear Tom" at work in the Rothay, half way between Pelter Bridge and Field Foot, so thither we bent our steps. He stood near the head of a rough stream which ran into a deep pool. The water was clear and the river of no more than an average height. His line was rather longer than his rod with a No. 5 hook, a foot above which was a small bullet. Having covered the hook artistically with his roe paste, he swung it across the stream, holding his rod up until the bait was carried down as far as the line permitted. He then allowed the bullet to drop to the bottom and left the roe to wave about with the current. Now few fish would remain long except under cover in such rough water, but the quiet pool below being well stocked with trout, they becoming aware of the close proximity of a delicious morsel by the smell carried down with the stream, traced the scent until they found the roe which eagerly seizing they were caught. After seeing three or four drawn out, I begged to try my hand and was equally successful, the roughness of the stream keeping us

out of sight of the fish. I was interested, especially as it was an undoubted proof that fishes have a keen sense of smell.

Twenty years after when fishing in the Ehen not far from Braystones, I recognized my old friend busy at work on the opposite side. I hailed him asking after his health, which he was thankful to say was good, but he complained heavily that an old man now more than 80 should have to pay 10*s*. for a salmon license. I asked if I should throw him some tobacco across, forgetting for the moment his anti-narcotic principles, upon which he recited one of his songs inveighing against the weed. I then said how does salmon roe get on? (For the information of my hearers its use was forbidden under heavy penalties in 1861), his reply was "Dar it, I wish I hed some on't." I wished him good-bye and now he has passed I trust to a better world.

We are all familiar with the wonderful power of smell exhibited in the canine family. One morning when staying in Howgill I set off with William Best and Richard Herd to go a fishing, the latter was accompanied by his favourite shepherd's dog. Soon after we passed Gateside we met another dog trotting along, which the one belonging to Richard Herd accosted by smelling at its head and mouth. No sooner was this done than it set off in the direction from which the stranger had come, its master saying "we shall see no more of it till night." On my asking the reason Richard Herd told me the dog we had met must have been feasting on a dead sheep, and his dog finding out the fact, had started off and would track the steps until it found out the carrion. Love of particular food and delight in hunting as well as maternal instinct, are powerful agents in animal creation and impel various species to forego their natural propensities. A favourite cat at Howgill Mill used to watch by the edge of Chapel Beck, and became a capital fisher, bringing many a fine trout up to the house, which, after

proudly displaying to its master or mistress it proceeded to eat. But I was surprised once whilst fishing with one of my sons in the Lune, a little below Roundthwaite Beck, I saw a brood of ducklings sporting in the river just under the bank on which I stood, and a hen shewing evident signs of alarm on account of her foster family, was watching them. Not wishing to disturb the playful innocents, I passed quietly by, and proceeded to fish, when suddenly I heard a commotion, and turning round saw the hen running wildly about, finding her brood were making across to where the river was deeper. Presently she nerved herself for the deed, and flew off the bank to the outside of the furthest straggler. When she reached the water there was a scene. The hen screamed, flapped her wings and drove the wanderers before her, and finally all reached the side in safety. The water was about 2ft. 6in. in depth, and the hen had about 12 feet to struggle over. I felt somewhat puzzled to understand how she managed, as I was under the impression that deep water was fatal to hens, but I noticed that along with flapping her wings she propelled herself with her feet.

ULLSWATER FROM NEAR HOW TOWN BAY.

From a sketch by The Hon. Mrs. Wm. Lowther.

LEAVES FROM AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK.

XVII.

Ullswater — Reasons for Scarcity of Fish therein — Beautiful Day in Martindale — Henry Wilkinson — Thrang Cragg — Boardale — Sandwyke — Blue Joe — Rev. Thomas Wilkinson.

ULLSWATER used to be a favourite lake with anglers. During the season, if the day was favourable, well-stocked panniers were the rule. In May, 1872, on account of the numerous complaints of the scarcity of trout, I went over there and took up my quarters at the Howtown Hotel. As information was given to me I entered it in my note book rather than trust to memory. I will endeavour to summarize concisely the parts told to me principally by those important chroniclers, the oldest inhabitants. Trout have greatly diminished during the last twelve years. Char which used to be caught with the rod are extinct, and fresh-water herrings, two cartloads of which Richard Mounsey once saw taken at a draught, are fast dying out. *Salmo ferox* also are never seen. Glenridding Beck is now so thick with lead ore washing that no fish will go up it to spawn. Nothing like the quantity of trout ascend Martindale Beck as used to do, and the same informant, who was born in the valley, also made an important statement that up to the previous twenty years he rarely ever saw a dead skelly — or fresh-water herring — in the lake or on the shore. Trout used to descend the Eamont in order to go up the Dacre and Lowther to spawn, in proof of which my informant told me he had often caught full-bellied trout in his eel pots in the autumn. Now, owing to the Penrith Waterworks, those which spawn in the Lowther cannot get back, and this

informant added that trout had been more plentiful in the Lowther and lower portions of the Eamont ever since. Many parties used to stay at the upper end of the lake to fish, but they had discontinued the practice, and this informant added : We had plenty of fish in the spring and summer brought in by anglers, and now we rarely see one. Such is a summary of reliable evidence in 1872, and the conclusion arrived at was that the *debris* from the mines along with the waterwork's weir were the two salient reasons for the decline of fish in Ullswater. Other causes aided, and it is to be hoped that those may be either removed or modified. It would occupy too much space in the present paper to go seriatim through the different arguments which may be adduced on this somewhat vexed subject, so I have confined myself to undoubted facts. I am pleased to inform those of my hearers who are anglers that some improvement in the lower reaches of the lake is reported this year.

Leaving this, to many around me, dry matter, let me ask you to accompany me into Martindale. I had often been at Howtown, but one cloudless day, after some broken weather, in the early part of September, 1853, I was breakfasting at Gelderd's Hotel, along with three professional gentlemen from Lincoln's Inn. We were strangers to each other and they to the place. They could not tell what to do, so I invited them to accompany me down the lake to Howtown and afterwards through Martindale, as I wanted to make some calls. They agreed, and off we set. Our sail was charming, each rocky knoll, with varied tints of heather and bracken, stood boldly out, with the loftier hills in the background. Passing Sandwyke, the blue smoke curled from the farmhouses embedded among trees, here and there peeped out a field of oats nearly ready for the sickle. The wood, principally of oak, under the west of Hallin Fell, was still dark green, forming a fine contrast with the surrounding steep, yellow with ferns. Having turned the

bold promontory of Hallin Fell, the landscape, interspersed with cornfields on the slope of Swarth Fell, was lovely. At Howtown we got a trap, and having ascended the Hawse made our way up the valley. Shortly after pssing the chapel on our left—an ancient, desolate building, having the appearance of a delapidated barn, surrounded by the chapel yard, in which for generations the forefathers of the valley sleep—we reached Thrang Cragg, occupied by Henry Wilkinson, a fine specimen of a Westmorland yeoman. He gave us a warm welcome, and spread for us on the oak table bread, cheese, butter, and spirits. The oatcake and butter, along with the rich milk, were a feast to my companions, who regaled themselves without the aid of spirits. Leaving two of the party, who were deeply engrossed in conversation with our host who had been a great admirer of Henry Brougham, we made our way to Dale Head or Stag Hall, the property of Squire Hasell, of Dalemain. Here we inspected the large banqueting-room, hung round with the heads of stags killed in the chase on the adjoining hills.

On our return to Thrang Cragg I found my two friends hardly ready to leave Mr. Wilkinson. His farm and surroundings were in good condition; his flock of sheep the best in the valley; and the house had a well-ordered appearance. He was universally esteemed by all who knew him. Retracing our steps we came in sight of the corn mill, at which the inhabitants used to get their oats ground. Passing that and some farmhouses romantically placed on the well-wooded banks of the stream we turned up Boardale. Here haymaking was going on alongside fields of yellow corn, while the younger portion of the community were engaged in the delightful occupation of gathering black cherries from a number of well-laden trees. It was very amusing to see some of the little children running about on the pretence of filling their baskets; but their deeply-stained

lips showed which way the fruit went. Our calls here appeared to give much pleasure to my companions, who were delighted with the simple hospitality of the inhabitants. Dismissing our driver we had a charming walk to Sandwyke, where our boat lay ready for us. The splendid day clothing nature with all her glory, combined with the picturesque scenery, has left a vivid impression on my memory, and I have no doubt on that of my companions. The charms of Martindale to me are always fresh. Many of those I then knew are gone. The hopper of the corn mill has long ceased its clack, and the building is disappearing, yet the loveliness of the country remains. In 1864, Henry Wilkinson's brother Joseph, commonly called Blue Joe from his devotion to the Brougham family, and his dress of dark blue cloth—erected the stone man called "Blue Joe" on the top of Hallin Fell in memory of Lord Brougham. For many years one of their relatives, the Rev. Thomas Wilkinson, was Incumbent of Martindale, and exercised like Goldsmith's village preacher a fatherly influence over his parishioners, sympathising in their joys and troubles, and aiding them in arranging their financial business. There has been within the last three years a new and commodious chapel erected on the Hawse, and the old inn with its one taproom has been replaced by a commodious hotel exceedingly well managed by Mr. and Mrs. Farrer. Sailing across to Airey Force, the Helvellyn range was glorious, and reaching the hotel at five we were ready for the excellent dinner awaiting us, after which we parted under the pleasing conviction of having spent a most delightful day. And I drove home. Nine years after I waited on one of the gentlemen at Lincoln's Inn, and though he was absorbed in some legal questions his countenance brightened when for a few minutes we recalled the events of that 7th of September, 1853. Since then we have never met.

LEAVES FROM AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK.

XVIII.

The Atmosphere in which Fish Live — Variety of Dental Arrangement — Mouth Chewers — Throat Chewers — Professor Owen on the Subject — Cuddies — Lateral Line — Remarkable Instances of Veracity in Fish — Cuvier on the Relative Position of Fishes in the Animal Scale — Salmon in Windermere.

In God's creation how wonderfully everything is ordered. Whether on land or in water animal life is sustained by inhaling the atmosphere be it water or air. To us, who are land creatures, it seems strange to see a fish rising at the flies skimming along the surface and every now and then swallowing one, and yet should you catch such fish and examine its stomach the flies will be in a mass without any material admixture of water. None of us, I think, in a river could open his mouth to seize a small morsel intending to swallow it without taking water also. Probably a fish, had it reasoning powers, might say how can we swallow our food without taking an inconvenient amount of air. No doubt such a provision exists as enables them to pass the water through their gills instead of swallowing it along with their food. Whilst on this portion of the economy of fishes I am reminded of what may interest those of my hearers unacquainted with the internal organization of these inhabitants of water. Some species of fish have a full dental development in their mouths, viz., the various species of salmonidæ, also pike, perch, as well as others. These are able to bite their food, and so to give it a certain amount of mastication ere it is swallowed, and may be termed mouth chewers. Other

species, viz., carp, roach, tench, &c., have no teeth in their mouths and are known by anglers as leathermouthed. As they seize their prey so is it bolted; these may be termed throat chewers. In a letter to the Rev. Wm. Houghton, the talented author of an excellent work on "British Fresh Water Fish," from Professor Owen, the learned Professor says :—"Continued observations under the rare and difficult circumstances according to which they can be made, have now convinced me that matters for mastication by throat chewers come from behind, as those by mouth chewers from before." He then gives a scientific description which any of my hearers can study at their leisure, but which I will endeavour to give in a few words. The teeth of these throat chewers are so placed as to be no impediment to the food passing into the stomach, from which it returns to be broken up by the throat teeth, which, in a tench, work upon a hardened projection on the base bone of the skull. (Genus *Cyprinidæ* have no teeth.)

It may be asked—do not pike bolt their food? When a pike has seized the bait, say a perch or small trout, every angler finds that some time, say a few seconds or more, elapses before he attempts to swallow it, during this interval he has the opportunity of bruising it with his formidable teeth.

Whilst waiting on the Carlisle Station one afternoon I fell in with a gentleman who, along with other luggage, carried a fishing-rod and pannier. On asking what sport he had met with, he replied "Very good. I was at Loch Etive, and did well with the fly among the cuddies." "Pray what sort of fish may they be?" "Well," he said, "I cannot tell, but they took the fly well." "Are they salmon trout?" concluding that if we choose to call salmon trout "morts," why should not the Highlanders call them "cuddies." However he did not suppose they were either trout or salmon. "They were bright fish from 4oz. to 8oz. in

weight and took the fly in a lively manner;" in fact they evidently furnished capital sport. My curiosity was aroused and I asked him to give me the address of some one residing at Connell Ferry, which he did, and on getting home I wrote forthwith, begging also for a sample of the interesting nondescripts. On the 2nd of October, when hope of solving the mystery had vanished, a letter arrived from South Connell, stating that six cuddies, called also "lithe," had been sent off, adding "The fish have not been taking well lately or you should have had them earlier." On receiving them I had them carefully unpacked and laid on a dish. Then with them and Yarrell before me I proceeded with an examination. My angling friend was right. They were neither trout nor salmon, but pollack whiting, which at times take the fly freely, are a clean silvery fish, and withal good eating — the *gladus pollachius* of Linnæus. This species are found chiefly in our rocky bays and estuaries. Though not generally distributed around our island, where located they are plentiful.

For many years the term "lateral line" used in the description of a fish fell on my ears without any special significance, and I had no conception of the important place it holds in the physiological economy of the fish family. Reading not very long since some details respecting surmised variety of species in salmon trout, my eye caught a paragraph which stated that the lateral line was a series of very minute holes, from which a slimy secretion exudes, covering and protecting the body of the fish.

At my request my old friend, John Brockbank, of Windermere Bank, procured for me some perch and a pike, as it was the close season for trout. The former were nine inches in length, and the latter twenty inches. All were in prime condition. Pike is generally spoken of as a fish of small repute — neither handsome in shape, agreeable in odour, nor fascinating to the palate. The one Mr. Brock-

bank sent me was a perfect beauty. Its body, and fins also, were striped with a lovely delicate green, and its scales were perfection, and laid on the body by a master hand — even the skill of the Master Tyler of our Great Masonic Body would fail in the execution of a similar work — no, the master hand of which I have spoken is the hand of God. So beautiful was the symmetry that I paused for some time ere I could summon courage to disturb it. The lateral line was well developed, and to my gratification I found on removing a piece of skin that the line and marks of the holes, from which the layers of flesh appeared to diverge, were distinctly shewn. Not being an anatomist I satisfied myself with examining the perch in a similar way with the same result. This line, visible on most fishes, runs on each side, following the direction of the backbone, from the tail to where it joins the head. I cannot at present tell of any other function performed by the line than that of lubricating the fish, and so enabling it to glide easily through the water, over rocks and stones, or any hard substance. One writer states that the greatest secretion is about the head, so as the fish passes through the water or faces the current the slimy mucus is carried over its back, the rest of the body being supplied from the line along the sides. The scales on a portion of the head of the pike were of a dark rich green overlaid with a golden tinge. The flesh was excellent. The scales of this, as well as of fishes generally, are of beautiful construction.

Before concluding my observations on pike, I am tempted to quote some remarkable incidents given by Mr. Pennell, in that excellent work, "The Angler Naturalist." After speaking of the insatiable appetite of this fish, he says — "A remarkable instance of the pike's rapidity of digestion was communicated to me by Mr. H. R. Francis. This gentleman, when fishing near Great Marlow, saw a pike in a semi-torpid condition amongst some weeds, and with a

landing net he secured it. A large eel was sticking in its throat, the head portion of which was swallowed and partially digested, whilst the tail, still alive, was twisting about its jaws."

"The same gentleman caught a pike in the Thames with a moorhen in its gullet, by which it was being suffocated. On another occasion a fish of five pounds had one of three pounds half swallowed, and yet in attempting to take his bait was caught. Portions of almost all well known substances have been found in their stomachs. Fish, flesh, and fowl, animal, vegetable, and mineral, are all acceptable."

One of the most remarkable instances was the following: —"A trimmer was set in the Avon over night. In the morning a heavy pike was caught. Proceeding to extract the hooks, the gentleman was obliged to open the fish, when he found another pike of considerable size inside the first, and in whose mouth his hooks were fast. This second fish was opened to get at the hooks, when a third pike of ¾lbs. weight, which had taken the original bait, was found partially digested."

Though not my intention to enter into an abstruse icthyological definition, I cannot dismiss the perch without comment. The common perch is one of the most beautiful of our fresh water fishes. When fresh caught, and in good condition, its colours are resplendent. The muciparous openings are numerous about the head. The scales shew a marked peculiarity. Whilst in nearly all other species the hinder margin of the scales is smooth, it is in perch cut into spines like a comb, so if you draw your finger from the tail to the head the sensation is that produced by a rasp. The scales have the nomenclature of ctenoid, from kteis, a comb. Perch are, as is well known, eager feeders. Pennell records the following: "A gentleman fishing in Windermere hooked a small perch in the eye, which organ came out when extracting the hook. He threw the little fish into the lake,

and proceeded to bait afresh, but his worms were done, so he picked up the eye from the bottom of the boat, placed it on the hook, and very soon having a bite he, to his surprise, drew the identical perch up from which the eye had been extracted." This anecdote fully bears out the remarks of Cuvier on the general attributes of fishes and their relative position in the animal scale : "Breathing by the medium of water, and so profiting only by the small quantity of oxygen contained in the air mixed with the water, their blood remains cold, their vitality, the energy of their senses and movements are less than in mammalia and birds. Fishes are, in fact, of all the vertebrata, those which give the least apparent evidence of sensibility. Having no elastic air they are dumb, or nearly so, and to all the sentiments which the voice awakens they are strangers." He adds, "their eyes are as it were motionless, and their ears so constructed as hardly capable of distinguishing the most striking sounds. They have little use for the sense of hearing ; condemned to live in the empire of silence where all is mute."

Going by the coach one day to Keswick, in the month of July, 1883, we pulled up at Waterhead for a few minutes. There were three boatmen standing by, to whom one of the passengers addressed this question, "What sort of fish are there in Windermere?" The tallest of the men replied, "Perch, pike, trout, char, and eels," to which I rejoined, "Also salmon." "Oh no," said the man, "There's no salmon ; there's big trout, but no salmon." Whilst I was proving my assertion to be correct the coach drove on. A few years ago I shewed this same man a grilse and two salmon trout, caught by poachers in the Troutbeck river.

Reflecting on the subject, and being convinced of the determination of some of the fishermen to ignore what is, I believe, a well known fact, I am induced to occupy a little time in proving that salmon frequent Windermere. In the first place the Leven, flowing out of Windermere, is well

stocked with migratory salmonidæ, which run up from the sea in the summer and autumn to spawn. No impediments exist to prevent their access to the lake. Every lake from which a salmon river flows directly into the sea has those fish passing through it on their way to the various streams running into them, for the purpose of breeding. It is a natural instinct. There cannot exist a reasonable doubt on the matter, and we may, therefore, be assured that migratory salmonidæ frequent Windermere during the season. Major Wade, of Sawrey, when using his char net in Windermere during 1880, caught 82 smoults, fully coated, on their descent to the sea, as well as several full grown salmon.

LEAVES FROM AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK.

XIX.

Fighting Power of Wasps — A Trout with Too Big a Mouthful — Artificial Fly Dressing and the Necessity for Good Materials — Charlie Airey's Way of Fly Fishing — Kendal Hooks — The late Dr. Gough — Sprods and Herling: their Distinctive Marks — *Salmo Ferox*.

In September when at St. Mary's Loch one morning, I noticed on the road to the stables at St. Mary's Cottage two wasps engaged in deadly combat. They flew at each other like two cocks, with this difference, they had no spurs—their weapons were their forceps. They stood about six inches apart after each round, as it were to take breath, which, when done, they returned to the fight with renewed vigour. I watched them for some time until my attention was arrested by seeing a large wasp surrounded by three smaller ones which struggled with each other, and used their forceps freely. This continued for some minutes, after which the large wasp flew heavily away, leaving the others on the ground. I have examined old nests in the winter without finding signs of life, and this circumstance brought to my mind what I believe is the recognized fact, that all the wasps, except a queen or female, die as winter approaches. The female leaves the nest and finds some retreat in which she lies torpid till the spring, when warmed by the sun she sallies forth, burrows a hole in which an incipient nest is formed, eggs are laid, and so soon as the larvæ appear they are fed by her till they get into the chrysalis state, from which they emerge, an army of workers, some to provide room for the nest which others are enlarging

to receive the eggs of the queen. Thus in three months if the weather is fine a progeny is raised, the numbers of which almost baffle calculation. The large wasp which I saw was the one destined for a colony in 1884. My intelligent host, Mr. Richardson, told me that one year he wondered why during August there were so many flies wings lying about. After careful observation he saw wasps attacking bluebottle flies, or the large green-bodied flies which molest sheep. A wasp after catching a fly laid it on the ground, bit off its legs, head, and wings, and flew off with the body. This cleared up the mystery.

After the occurrence which I have related respecting the wasps, I walked across the hills, accompanied by my son and Robert Laidlaw, to Ettrick Kirk. When the service was over we all dined at the Manse, with Mr. and Mrs. Falconer. Taking a stroll through the garden which, considering the elevation, appeared very productive in vegetables, fruit, and flowers, we noticed a number of wasps on the tender shoots of some apple and pear trees. Lifting up these shoots we found the wasps busily engaged in feeding on the *Aphides*, of which they had entirely cleared several of the shoots. So intent were they on the work they took no heed of Mr. Falconer when he handled the leaves on which they were busy.

Mr. Richardson relates the following anecdote about ants: — "Sitting on the hill top one day eating his dinner his attention was arrested by a number of ants running off with the crumbs which fell from his hands. Two of the ants were fighting over a large crumb. So earnest were they that taking them up and placing them on his hand did not separate them. The combat waxed hotter. At last one ant bit off the leg of its opponent, who rewarded its antagonist by biting its body in two."

In Paper No. 6, on the Salmonidæ of Westmorland, I spoke of the variety of food taken by trout, including flukes

and toads. In my note-book I find the following: June 28, 1875, R. B. Lee was fishing near Levens Bridge, when he noticed a trout, about 1lb. weight, sailing hither and thither in a remarkable way in a piece of slack water. Watching it carefully he found it had seized a fluke the size of his hand. Now, the trout could not swallow it, so it was endeavouring, with the aid of its teeth, being a mouth-chewer, to reduce the fluke into edible pieces, which it would have been impossible for a throat-chewer to have accomplished. This mention of a fluke reminds me of a jotting, July 29, 1879: Drawing at Burkwood, Ulpha, for salmon, the fishermen caught two large flukes with the net, the mouths of which were set in opposite directions — one to the right side, the other to the left. When set to the right side they are called wry-mouthed. It is well known that when trout seize an artificial fly they do so because it appears to them to resemble either a particular fly or a form of insect life on which they are accustomed to feed. Whether in the larvæ condition or in the perfect state almost all insects are the prey of fish. In our trout streams the angler knows how, when the March Brown is on during the early spring, that it is needful for him to exercise his skill in producing a good imitation of that favourite insect. The same may be said of the willow fly—and that torment to rod fishers—the black gnat, and on our lakes, of the green and grey drake, and in some seasons, of the bracken clock, as trout feed eagerly on such when they appear, and for the time being neglect those of every day's existence.

It is needful to have good judgment in the selection of material for fly-dressing. A feather, however good in colour, must neither be stiff nor open, that is, the fibres must not lie in the water, like so many hard lines having no connection with each other, but along with the right colour it ought to possess a softness and (if I may use a term which my angling friends will appreciate) a clear complexion. I am now

speaking of feathers for the wing portion of trouting flies, and probably, to some extent, my remarks may apply to those for salmon. The colour of the body is important, and at times especially so. I remember a gentleman having had good sport with a fly dressed with gold-coloured silk. He unfortunately in the midst of a successful career lost it in some bush. He found one in his book exactly similar, with this exception, the body was of a pale yellow, which he attached to his line; but, to his disappointment, not a a trout would rise. He walked for a mile down the river, to see if I could aid him. Alas, I had no bright, gold-coloured silk in my book. An acquaintance with the habits of fish, and the feeding ground chosen by them according to the state of the water, is a requisite for all anglers. This can only be acquired by experience. How well I remember an old noted rod-fisher, Charles, commonly Charlie, Airey, on his way up the Mint. He did not keep throwing his line on every portion of the stream, as many anglers do. No ; he selected certain spots, unwound his casting-line from his hand, dropped on one knee—when advisable so to do—threw his flies to the selected places, hooked his trout, which, if of a manageable size, was drawn across the surface of the water into his landing-net. Another throw, and, if no fish appeared, up he jumped and, walking rapidly to his next choice, went through the same routine with similar success. Casting the flies so that they fall lightly on the water is an act well worth the attention of the scholar in the science. When this is accomplished deftly, many a trout rises at the flies either before or immediately upon their touching the water, whereas if on the contrary, the line is lashed on the water the surroundings are disturbed, and the angler loses many a chance of a fine trout. To be successful, a piscator must not only love the art, but also, as opportunity presents itself, study it as a science, and use the best material for his tackle. By best I do not mean the most expensive, but the most suitable.

At the Fisheries Exhibition there were trouting socket-jointed rods at 3*l.* 10*s.*, made of small pieces of bamboo cane, fitted like the staves of a barrel cemented together, and secured by a series of lappings. No one could help admiring them for their workmanship. They handled charmingly. At the same time, a spliced rod either in two or four pieces, may be procured equally as good in all respects for the purpose, and much more convenient to mend in case of accident, for one-fifth of that sum. Anglers in the 15th century made their own hooks, and have handed down to us pictures of the tools they used. I doubt even with all their care they ever produced an article equal to those made in this town. Nor in my experience I scarcely remember one either breaking or bending with fair play. The hooks manufactured by Messrs. Geo. Hutchinson and Son, of Kendal, are for excellence unrivalled, and have a world-wide fame, which I hope they may long enjoy.

Amongst my various letters connected with the subject of this paper, I have several bearing an honoured signature, and I feel sure many of this audience will sympathise with my feelings of love and veneration when I mention the name of Thomas Gough. Yes, I never enter this lecture room without casting my eyes on the bust of one whom I knew in my early boyhood, and with whom in advanced life I had pleasing intercourse and correspondence. In our various researches his object was truth. When a specimen was under examination instead of trying to make it conform to his own preconceived ideas he tested it according to the most scientific description he was able to procure, going *seriatim* through its various organic forms. *Salmo salar* or salmon, *salmo trutta* or salmon trout, and *salmo eriox*, bull trout, were no puzzle, but our sprods of the Kent and Leven, the herling of the Nith, Esk, and Liddel, the smelts of the Irt, Calder, and Ehen, all apparently the same species under different names, provided us with a large amount of

discussion. Specimens were procured from the various rivers, preparations made of their salient features, Yarrel, Couch, and Houghton were studied, opinions of fishermen were canvassed, some being decided they were young salmon. The conclusion at which we arrived was this—They are not salmon. And being in most important points similar to salmon trout, and as no specimen came to hand exceeding one pound in weight, I have subsequently concluded they are the young of salmon trout on their first return from the sea. To go further into the matter might weary my patient listeners, I will therefore, especially as the reasons for my opinion are given in my first paper on Salmonidæ, simply draw attention to the following descriptions which shew the marked features in the different species :—

The outer gill cover or sub-operculum of *salmo salar* is nearly semicircular. There are two or at most three teeth across the top of the vomer and none down it.

The outer gill cover of *salmo eriox* or bull trout is very angular and the inter-operculum wider than in the other species. The teeth are similar in arrangement except on the vomer where they consist of three across the top and three or four in an irregular line down. They are strong and well developed.

The outer gill covers of *salmo trutta* or salmon trout, and *salmo fario* or common trout, and *salmo ferox* or great lake trout, are angular, being in shape between that of the salmon and bull trout. The teeth down the vomer in salmon trout overlap each other, and in common trout form two distinct lines.

Salmo ferox or great lake trout have very strong teeth. At the top of the vomer is a triangular curtilage studded with five or six, from which an irregular line containing about a similar number extends towards the throat.

LEAVES FROM AN ANGLER'S NOTE BOOK.

XX.

Salmo Ferox, or Great Lake Trout — D. Kennedy's Letter with Description of that Fish and an Account of Disastrous Harvest — Various Angling Incidents — Conclusion.

On the 3rd December, 1877, I had a letter from my Highland friend at Dalwhinnie, close to Loch Ericht, in reply to an enquiry of mine regarding *salmo ferox*, (a species of salmonidæ occasionally met with in the Scotch lochs). I have not been fortunate enough to catch one, but I believe the experience of my friend Mr. James Allen has been different. Much discussion has arisen respecting this species, some anglers classing every large trout over four pounds in weight as a *ferox* or great lake trout.

[Letter as the original.]

"Dalwhinnie, 3 Dec., 1877.

"G. F. Braithwaite, Esq.,

"Dear Sir,

"I received your letter and we are very Glad to see your hand of write. I also Got the paper you sent me. . . . . If it is the Lord's will that we be all spared for next season I hope we may see each others faces once more. In Regard to inquiries about the fish the Salmo feerock are not the same shape nor the same in the spots as the comon black trout. The Salmo feerock is the very shape of a salmon, very small head, Round spots nearly the size of a four penny piece with the ring in the spot very Reid, Square in the tail and very large fins, but except the spots the Rest of the skin is the same as comon trout. Their is no difference in shape in either head or body

between the male and the female. The difference are in the mouth. The male has a crook on the lower jaw something like the Bill of an Eagle or a Hawk. They generally spans in the later end of October, and if the least shower of snow comes on the top of the hills they are into deep water at once. They are very rare to get and it is seldom they weigh over eight pounds. They are as good for eating as any Salmon when properly Cooked, and so is all the large fishishes of the Mountain Lakes that are supplied with Pure Spring Water. I am very sorry that it is altogether out of my Power at this time to get hold of a large one of any kind of them to send you as a spice man of them, but I hope if I be spared till spring that I will be able to do so. We had terrible stormy Weather here for the last three months, the farmers has not got their corn in yet, hay is much damaged, turnips and Potatoes are lost altogether owing to so many nights of frost in July and August and so much Rainy weather, but still meal are not dear and the Price of Bread is not altered yet. Wife joins with me in our sincere love to you and all yours.

"I am, Dear Sir,

"Yours faithfully,

"D. KENNEDY."

On the 28th May he sent me one weighing six pounds, but was sorry it was in poor condition, adding "he is a female." On the 6th of June this was followed by a beautiful fish, weighing eleven pounds. This *salmo ferox* answered to Donald Kennedy's description, as well as to that relating to the teeth and gill covers, as given by me in the previous chapter. The teeth as well as the large spots, being marked features of that species.

Whilst sitting round the fire after a day's fishing, enjoying what Dr. Syntax calls a cooling pipe, many are the incidents related by anglers, some being ludicrous, others more exciting.

One of my friends, when fishing on Loch Leven, hooked a trout of three pounds weight, on the tail fly of a slender line. Whilst the gillie was netting it, one of the droppers caught his ear. My friend's companion had no knife, so he was told to bite the dropper off. Whilst this was being done, the scene was amusing to all but the poor gillie; for the fish kept tugging away at the line which was fast in his ear. Finally, the fish was secured; the hook denuded of its wrapping and slipped out along the shank. Whilst the blood was being staunched, the gillie declared he was ready to undergo a similar operation if another fine trout was the result.

A party of ladies and gentlemen staying at Redcar went out to fish for whiting. The boatman as he baited the lines handed them round. One of the ladies asked what she was to do with her's. "Oh, put it out, and let it run off until the lead touches the bottom." Several fish were caught by all but the lady, which, the boatman observing, said, "have you not had a bite, m'am?" Oh, I don't know." "Why, m'am where's your line?" "Oh, I put it overboard as you told me, and I have not seen it since."

One of my friends told me lately a fact with which I was unacquainted, viz., that the male salmon casts the gib or hook, which during the autumn forms on its lower jaw. It comes off at a joint from which it has grown. As the male fish is without this appendage in the spring it is thought by some that those who have it so strongly marked, die on their return to the sea. Of this we have no proof, and therefore we may safely adopt the more generally received opinion that the fish casts this appendage at the close of the breeding season.

The following singular instance of vitality in a pike was sent to me by a friend:—"My son and a friend went out fishing one day in the Trent. After some little time my son found he had hooked something which, from the resist-

ance experienced, he concluded was either a large fish or an inanimate object. His friend came to his assistance, and with considerable difficulty they landed a large pike. They brought it home and found it weighed 14lbs. They agreed to divide it between them, and as it was a very handsome fish, my son's friend chose the head part that he might have it preserved. It was accordingly divided at about half its length, and the two pieces left on the kitchen table in such a way as to shew its length. The time between leaving the water and being cut in two was about a quarter of an hour. The two portions had lain in that position some half an hour, when my daughter took a young female friend in to see the beautiful fish. They stood facing its head, admiring its size and beauty, when, all at once, the creature opened its mouth, and made a strange, hissing sound! My daughter and her friend left the room much quicker than they entered!!"

A gentleman had been fishing with the fly on the Tweed early one morning without much success. As he returned to breakfast, one of his hooks got fast in a piece of red flannel, sticking on a post in the river. When the hook came loose it brought a small portion of the red shirt, for such the rag was, away with it. Walking by the river side, he occasionally let his line drag in the water, never for a moment dreaming of catching a fish. Suddenly he felt a great tug, and turning his eyes towards his line beheld a fine trout floundering at the end, which he secured with his landing net. The fish weighed 2½lbs., and had seized the bit of the old red shirt.

Two gentlemen were fishing, one at each side of a bridge, for perch. One had a bite, but wishing to give plenty of time he waited a little. Just then the other feeling a bite they both pulled up their lines at the same moment, when one perch was brought to the top. The fish, which was a good one, had taken both baits, and the question to be solved was to whom did the perch belong. Occasionally it

is said all are fish that come in the net, or, in other words, all that the line catches are acceptable. There are, however, exceptions. Three years ago I was fishing near Tebay, and a good many swallows were about. Whilst moving a few yards lower down the stream, though I reeled in my line as far as I could, leaving only four yards flying loose, yet an unfortunate bird thought my fly was a natural one, and taking it was hooked. I can manage a fish but not a bird when hooked. After several attempts to secure it, the swallow flew off with a part of my line. Bats are sometimes caught in a similar way. Amongst my memoranda I met with the following : — "A man walking alongside a ditch on the Barton road, near Cambridge, saw a rat swimming along. Having a stick armed with a spike, he launched it at the rat, and succeeded in transfixing the animal to the bank. He thought this was done cleverly, but his surprise was great when on turning the rat over something shining appeared in the wound, which turned out to be a Queen Anne's sixpence. In June, 1865, Mr. Jonathan Bell, of Beck Bank, was fishing in the Eden, near Great Salkeld, when he hooked a trout which kept him an hour before he was able to land it. It proved to be a splendid specimen of a common trout, weighing 7lbs. 3oz."

In Part V. of the Salmonidæ of Westmorland, I spoke of the mode of taking salmon in the estuary of the Solway, at the mouth of the Nith. Subsequent information led me to test the exactness of that description, and in order to arrive at the correct definition of the *modus operandi* I applied to Mr. Ford, of the hotel at New Abbey, who most kindly favoured me with full details, along with a model.

The fishery at the mouth of the Nith, on the west side, belonged to the Prior of New Abbey, of which Mr. Oswald is now the owner, who lets it to such of the inhabitants as desire to follow the occupation for pleasure or profit. Each owner of a half net pays 1*s*. yearly. Lots are drawn for

positions, to which for the season the men adhere. Dressed in convenient woollen garments, with a long heavy blanket, called a wapping, wound round their loins in such manner as to form a bag or pocket at one side, each man takes his right place as the tide flows, holding the net against the rising stream. The net is 14 feet broad and about 9 feet long, and 4 feet deep at the mouth, attached to a light frame. When the fisherman stands close to the upright pole the current makes the net form two bags or pockets, the man dividing them. When he feels a fish in the pocket he manipulates the net so that the fish cannot escape, and killing it with a wooden hammer attached to his wrist he places it in his wapping, and restores the net again to a catching position. I have seen the nets on the fishermen's shoulders, but never witnessed them at work, which I am told is quite a sight, as many as 30 or 40 standing up to their loins in the tide at once, for three or four hours.

New Abbey, along with other places I have visited, recall pleasing recollections, each having its own peculiar interest. Those in Scotland are hallowed by the loving memory of one dear friend now departed, who threw a charm over every scene we visited together, and it is a delight to return to those spots and enjoy, along with the beauties always fresh, intercourse with the many friends which I have made amongst the residents.

Having far exceeded the limit which at the commencement I intended to reach, I must draw to a conclusion. Whilst sensible of many imperfections, I can honestly say my desire has been to contribute such information as I have from time to time collected, and my labours will be more than repaid should these pages give pleasure or rouse desires for investigating the somewhat abstruse but interesting science of Icthyology, in which, as in all God's creatures, is displayed His marvellous handywork, leading the student to admire and praise the Creator's name.

ETTRICK FOREST.

JAMES the Vth, on June 2, 1528, having assembled a large number of the nobility from the Highlands and Lowlands, with their retainers and others, amounting to 12,000, all carrying provisions for one month, and accompanied by their dogs, for the purpose of hunting the deer and other wild animals, and also to punish the Border freebooters, proceeded to Meggatland, and hounded and hawked all that land, including Ettrick Forest, in which expedition he slew eighteen score of harts. After this he placed 10,000 sheep in the forest, which gradually destroyed the trees, and finally changed the aspect of the country. The road by which he travelled is still to be traced, and is called the king's road.

TUSHIELAW AND HENDERLANDS.

JAMES the Vth hung Adam Scott, of Tushielaw, on a large ash tree, part of which is still standing near the castle. Ballangeich, or Windy Pass, was the appellation given to a narrow passage to Stirling Castle, and James the Vth assumed during his various freaks in disguise the name of "The guidman of Ballangeich," so Perys Cockburn, of Henderland, knew that he was summoned by his Sovereign when the message was from the "Guidman of Ballangeich."

About a mile below the foot of St. Mary's Loch the Yarrow receives the tributary of Douglas Burn, on the banks of which is the old square tower of Black-house, one of the most ancient seats of the Douglas. It is probable that it

was built by William, the first Earl Douglas, for Robert Bruce had granted to his favourite warrior, Sir James Douglas, the forests of Traquair and Selkirk. From this tower Lady Mary Douglas was carried off by her lover, between whom and her seven brothers a most bloody scene took place, as they all perished in attempting to bring her back to her father's house. Her lover was also slain. Seven large stones on the heights of Black-house are pointed out as marking the different spots where the brothers fell. Lady Margaret and her lover are said to have been buried in St. Mary's Chapel.

Lord William was buried in St. Marie's Kirk,
Lady Margaret in St. Marie's quire,
Out of the Lady's grave grew a bonny red rose,
And out of the Knight's a briar.

And they twa met, and they twa plait,
And fain they wad be near;
And a' the warld might ken right weel
They were twa lovers dear.

But bye and rade the black Douglas,
And wow but he was rough,
For he pulled up the bonny briar
And flang'd into St. Mary's Loch.

About 300 or 400 yards from Yarrow Kirk are some large heaps of stones, under which human bones have been found, along with flint arrow heads, evidently indicative of the site of some great battle. Near the bridge over Chapel Hope Burn, in front of Chapel Hope, the present road has been cut through a mound, the two sections of which still remain. This mound bore the traditionary name of the Court Knowe, evidently significant of its having been a place where justice was distributed, at a time when the population was much more numerous than at present throughout that district.

Prior to the rigorous enforcement of the existing salmon laws, the inhabitants along the banks of the Yarrow and

around St. Mary's Loch were accustomed to spear large quantities of fish when they were on the spawning beds in November and December. Carrying a torch, made of the dry roots of the Scotch fir, or of a quantity of sacking steeped in tar, a party of three or four men would spear as many as thirty salmon in a night. Some of these were salted, and some "kippered" for winter use. Occasionally the spearsman would mistake the depth of the water in which the salmon lay, and a good ducking was the consequence—not a very pleasant adjunct to the sport on a cold frosty night. It is a well known fact, in spite of such discomforts attending these expeditions, the sport had a fascination which no risks could damp.

It is much to be regretted that owing to the continued destruction of large trout in the spawning season, which ought to be made illegal in Scotland, as it is in England, and the persistent catching by anglers of the small fry during the summer months in the streams running into St. Mary's Loch, the trout are gradually becoming scarcer. If anglers would return to the water all fish under eight inches in length, there would very soon be an excellent supply of good-sized trout.